

ANDERSEN'S



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*Historical
Children's Books*

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CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME





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HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

Life of Andersen.

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN was the only child of poor parents. He was born at Odense, on the island of Funen, on the 2d of April, 1805. The town of Odense has been immortalized by Andersen in one of his tales, "The Bell-Deep," which is no doubt founded on a legend he had been acquainted with from his childhood.

Hans Andersen's father was a shoemaker, who, it is said, had not the means of giving him much education, but he sent him to the grammar school in the town, and the boy's natural abilities and love of read-

ing made him take advantage of the instruction he there received. Not, however, for long; his father's death, in 1814, left his mother a sorrowing widow, in poor circumstances, with an orphan boy of nine years. It therefore became necessary for him to leave school, and try to help his mother in earning a home for them both. An opportunity for him to work at a factory in the town was offered to his mother, and eagerly accepted by her, and for some years he worked as a factory boy.

There was something, however, so different in the coarse and illiterate workmen at

the factory to the refined and tender-hearted child, that his patient sufferings of their taunts and torments must have been terrible to bear. At last he complained to his mother, and she removed him. An opening for the youth, now in his fourteenth year, to become a tailor presented itself; but the boy of intellectual tastes implored his mother, even with tears, to allow him to choose his own career in life. His mother at last consented, and with a small sum of money in his pocket, he left his home to travel to Copenhagen alone.

Who can tell how much of a mother's love and pride in her son gave her the courage to part with him, and to utter a farewell which cost her so much? No doubt she already looked forward to a glorious future for her imaginative child, who most probably inherited from her the refined and poetic fancy which in after years made him so famous.

Her fancies, indeed, had a tinge of the superstition still holding sway in the land of the Norsemen; and, strange to say, she looked forward to a time when her son should revisit his native town, and Odense would be illuminated in his honor. This really happened many years afterwards, when the great poet and author, covered with glory and fame, entered the town of his birth.

And now the boy of fourteen was launched on the ocean of life to seek for that renown which only became his after years of disappointment and trial. How little he was appreciated in the great city was well known. From early childhood his keen susceptibility to the emotions of

joy or sorrow made them sometimes overpowering. At nine years of age he had laughed at a comedy, or wept at a tragedy performed on the stage by marionettes! and in after years, the real, living actors would move him with equal power.

On his arrival at Copenhagen he met with a friend in one of the professors at the University, and as the boy was fond of music, he proposed that Andersen should learn to sing on the stage. But this effort failed, for the boy's voice, though harmonious, was thin and weak, and could not be heard even at a moderate distance.

After some years of struggling to earn a living, even while writing down the curious thoughts with which his imagination teemed, he determined to visit Germany; but his friend had obtained for him instruction in Latin and German, which enabled him to remain and to bring out in 1829 his first work, a play entitled "The Life of a Nicolaton," which was very successful; and in the next year he published his first story, and soon after another—"Shadow Pictures."

In 1832 he carried out his intention and visited Germany, and here his books at once obtained notice, which gave him courage to continue the work he so loved, with renewed zeal. During the years from 1832 to 1848 Andersen wrote his far-famed works, a "Picture Book without Pictures;" "The Improvisatore;" "He was only an Actor;" "The Story of the Year," and several others.

But the works that made him famous were his "Fairy Tales," the first of which appeared in 1838, while others so quickly

followed that they obtained for Hans Andersen the name of "The Children's Friend."

In the early part of Andersen's career he had been greatly pained, but not daunted, by the severe and even mocking criticisms which his writings received, in Copenhagen especially.

The first to notice them were the editors of comic periodicals, and in these they were

One of Andersen's oldest friends was Count Conrad of Rantzsan-Breitenburgh. This gentleman, who had been Prime Minister in the Duchy of Schleswig-Holstein, had given Andersen his first step as an author, which the narrow limits of his own poor dwelling rendered almost impossible. The Count had, however, heard of him, sought him out, and recognized at once that the humble-minded young writer was



THE FACTORY.

criticised and made a mock of, often with a want of delicacy most painful to the sensitive author. By others his style was pronounced to be intricate, confused, and crude. At the same time, it was acknowledged that the writer possessed great power of language, and a remarkable richness of thought and imagination, rendering the word-pictures his fancy drew too attractive to be passed over unread.

destined to become a popular poet and author.

This was the turning point in Andersen's career; the unkind criticisms referred to had so disheartened him that he was tempted to despair of success. The Count's opinion gave him fresh courage and energy for renewed efforts, which, as we now know, brought him glory and fame.

When the Count left Copenhagen he did

not forget Andersen, but made him promise that at the first opportunity he would come and visit him at Castle Breitenburgh. The opportunity presented itself after some years, and Andersen used to say that the weeks and months of his stay at Castle Breitenburgh, belonged to the most beautiful period of his life, and truly he might say this; for Count Conrad, the owner of the castle, was in the highest degree a man calculated to arouse and console the tender-hearted, poetic, and often sad spirit of his guest.

Andersen was one of those clever men who are totally devoid of vanity, and he would often express in a straightforward and touching manner his modest opinion of his own talents, and yet at the same time acknowledge how greatly he longed for and needed encouragement. And all this time within his soul, his thoughts were pressing full on his creative fancy which he longed to send forth to the world, yet dreaded with pain these adverse criticisms. Not even in his old age, when he had been recognized by the whole civilized world as a poet and author, could Andersen harden himself to treat with indifference the unjust criticism of the most insignificant critic.

Count Conrad died in the year 1844, while Andersen was in Germany, and the loss of such a friend was to the poet very great. And although he was now a popular author, and often invited by the Danish and German nobility to visit them at their castles, the memory of his first kind friend, the owner of Breitenburgh Castle, held the foremost place in his heart.

He was popular in Denmark now, al-

though his name as a story-writer was first recognized by the common people, who quickly appreciated and understood the vein of simplicity which runs through every page of Hans Andersen's tales. The characters in these stories, whether of men or animals, whether animate or inanimate, became living, breathing creatures when he read his stories aloud, for in spite of his humble birth, his pronunciation of his native language was pure, correct and noble. While listening, it seemed not impossible that the objects described might be beings possessing souls, and the power of becoming sad or joyous, sublime or ridiculous as the author represented.

In the year 1845, King Christian VIII., of Denmark, placed a very pleasant shooting box, situated in the thickest covert of the magnificent park of Fredericksburg, at the disposal of Hans Andersen, who had been a widower for many years. This unused building was now named "Pheasant Court;" it had a large garden and was to be used by the poet as his own for life.

It was about this time that Andersen made a tour of the different countries of Europe, and those who knew him personally speak with delight of having met him at dinner parties, and of the glowing descriptions he would give of the places he had visited, and the persons he had met during his travels. Scottish scenery charmed him, and he would speak of Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns, to whom he was introduced, in the most glowing terms.

Among his friends nearer home were the two renowned Swedish ladies, "Fredrika Bremer, and Jenny Lind," both of

whom had a touching sisterly affection for the poet.

His love of flowers was a poet's love of the beautiful, and even from the first appearance of that decay of nature which was to remove him at last from earth, he

Melchior. Finding himself, as he thought, better, he returned home, but was still obliged to keep in his room.

In the spring of 1873 he traveled to Switzerland, and there went through a course of goat's milk, among the mountains



BREITENBURGH CASTLE.

would have fresh flowers in his room daily, often remarking on their beauty and fragrance.

In 1872, Andersen had suffered from a severe illness while visiting at Rolighed, the country residence of a merchant named

at Glion, on the lake of Geneva. He there became so much better and stronger that he was able to take long drives, and returned to his home full of hope that his health was quite restored. But this hope soon faded, and in the spring of 1875 it

became evident that his days were numbered. But he was not forsaken by his friends. Frau Melchior watched over him with tender care, and as the summer passed and he became weaker, she had him removed to their country house, Rolighed.

The king came to visit him many times, and the crown prince much oftener, and he

that surrounded him, and while talking with his visitors he would often cut out and paste together a little figure in which the poetic art would show itself, even as in his fairy tales the charm of the characters introduced would represent his own poetic imagination.

Hans Christian Andersen died August 4th, 1875, at the age of 70. He had on that

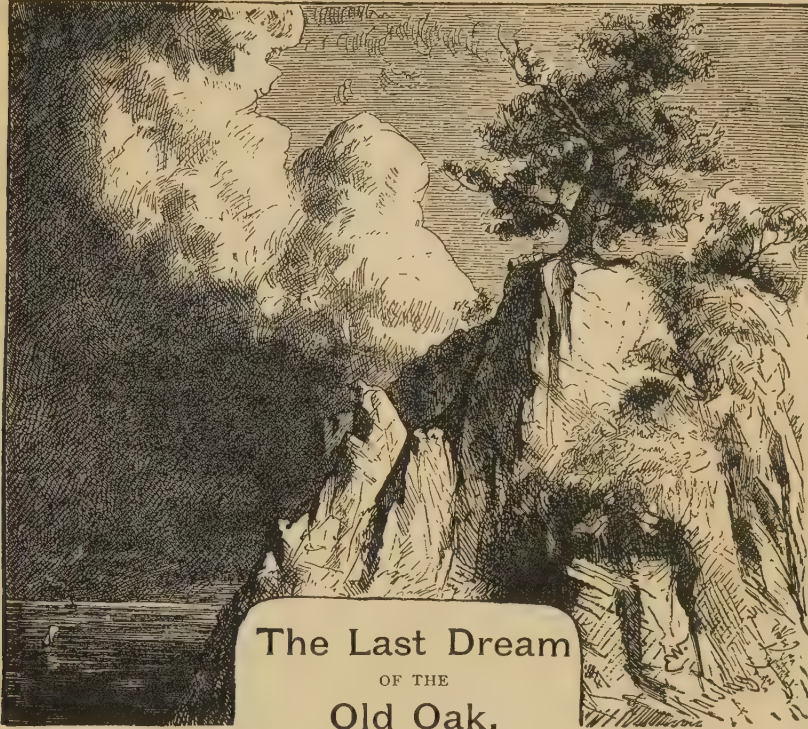


ANDERSEN'S MONUMENT.

was also visited frequently by men and women of high position. Not only were his last days brightened by these attentions, but from his own hopeful and poetical character.

Days passed, and as he grew weaker he was greatly comforted by the tender care

day been sleeping peacefully for some hours and at about eleven o'clock at night Frau Melchior left the bedside for a moment, and when she returned, after scarcely two minutes absence, he was gone. He had only breathed one gentle sigh and awoke, not again on earth, but in heaven.



The Last Dream
OF THE
Old Oak.

HIGH up on the steep shore, and not far from the open sea, stood a very old oak tree. It was just three hundred and sixty-five years old, but that was to the tree as the same number of days might be to us. We wake by day and sleep by night. It is different with the tree; it is obliged to keep awake through three seasons of the year, and does not get any sleep till winter comes. Winter is its time for rest—its night after the long day of spring, summer, and autumn. On many a warm summer, the flies, that exist only for a day, had fluttered about the old oak, enjoyed life and felt happy; and if, for a moment, one of the tiny creatures rested on one of his large, fresh leaves, the tree would always say, "Poor little creature! your whole life

consists only of a single day. How very short. It must be quite melancholy."

"What do you mean?" the little creature would reply. "Everything around me is so wonderfully bright and beautiful, that it makes me joyous."

"But only for one day, and then it is all over."

"Over," repeated the fly; "what is the meaning of that? Are you all over, too?"

"No; I shall very likely live for thousands of your days."

"Then I don't understand you. You may have thousands of my days, but I have thousands of moments in which I can be merry and happy. We have the same time to live, only we reckon differently."

And the little creature danced and floated

in the air and was very happy. When the sun sank low, it felt tired. Its wings could sustain it no longer, and gently and slowly it glided down upon the soft, waving blades of grass, nodded its little head as well as it could nod, and slept peacefully and sweetly. The fly was dead.



"Poor little fly!" said the oak; "what a terribly short life!" And so, on every summer day the dance was repeated, the same questions asked, and the same answers given. The same thing was repeated through many generations of flies.

The oak remained awake through the morning of spring, the noon of summer, and the evening of autumn; its time of rest drew nigh—winter was coming, and at last it fell asleep.

It was just about Christmas time that the tree dreamed a dream. All that had happened during every year of his life seemed to pass before him, as in a festive procession. Then it seemed as if new life was thrilling through every fibre of root and stem and leaf. The tree felt itself stretching and spreading out, while through the root ran the warm vigor of life. As he grew higher and still higher, with increased strength, his self-satisfaction in-

creased, and with it arose a joyous longing to grow higher and higher, to reach even to the warm, bright sun itself. Already had his topmost branches pierced the clouds, which floated beneath them like large white swans. The stars became visible in broad daylight, large and sparkling, like clear and gentle eyes. These were wonderful and happy moments for the old tree, full of peace and joy; and yet, amidst all this happiness, the tree felt a yearning, longing desire that all the other trees, bushes, herbs and flowers beneath him, might be able also to rise higher, as he had done, and to see all this splendor, and experience the same happiness. At length his longing was satisfied. Up through the clouds came the green summits of the forest trees, and beneath him, the oak saw them rising, and growing higher and higher. Bush and herb shot upward, and some even tore themselves up by the roots to rise more quickly. Every native of the wood, even to the brown and feathery rushes, grew with the rest, while the birds ascended with the melody of song. On a blade of grass, that fluttered in the air like a long green ribbon, sat a grasshopper, cleaning his wings.

"But where is the little blue flower that grows by the water?" asked the oak, "and the purple bell-flower and the daisy?"

"Here we are, here we are," sounded in voice and song.

"But the beautiful thyme of last summer, where is that? and the lilies-of-the-valley, which last year covered the earth with their bloom? and the wild apple-tree, with its lovely blossoms, and all the glory of the wood, which has flourished year after year?"

"We are here, we are here," sounded voices higher in the air.

"Why this is beautiful, too beautiful to be believed," said the oak, in a joyous tone.

And the old tree, as he still grew upwards and onwards, felt that his roots were loosening themselves from the earth.

"It is right, it is best," said the tree, "no fetters hold me now. I can fly up to

earth. He fell—his three hundred and sixty-five years were passed as the single day of the flies. On the morning of Christmas-day, when the sun rose, the storm had ceased. From all the churches sounded the festive bells, and from every hearth, even of the smallest hut, rose the smoke into the blue sky, like the smoke from the festive thank-offerings on the



the very highest point in light and glory. And all I love—all are here"

Such was the dream of the old oak; and while he dreamed, a mighty storm came rushing over land and sea, at the holy Christmas time. There was a crackling and crushing heard in the tree. The root was torn from the ground just when he fancied it was being loosened from the

Druids' altars. The sea gradually became calm; and on board a great ship that had withstood the tempest during the night, all the flags were displayed, as a token of joy and festivity. "The tree is down! The old oak—our landmark on the coast!" exclaimed the sailors. "It must have fallen in the storm of last night. Who can replace it? Alas! no one."



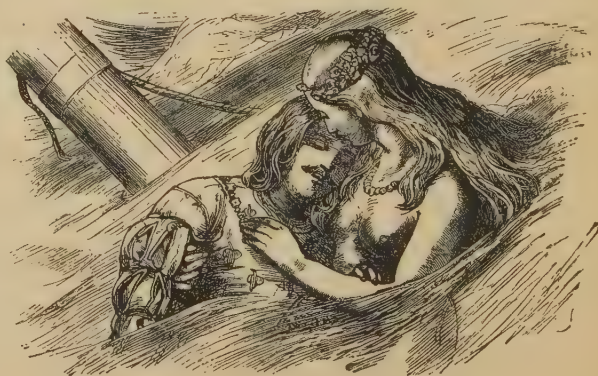
The Little Mermaid.

THE Sea King had been a widower for many years, and his old mother kept house for him in the palace at the bottom of the sea. He had six beautiful daughters, and the youngest was the most beautiful of them all. Her skin was as clear and delicate as a rose leaf, and her eyes as blue as the deepest sea; but, like all the others, she had no feet, and her body ended in a tail, like a fish.

At last she reached her fifteenth birthday. So she said, "Farewell," and rose as lightly as a bubble to the surface of the water. The sun had just set, as she raised her head above the waves. The sea was calm, and the air mild and fresh. A large ship, with three masts, lay becalmed on the water, with only one sail set; for not a breeze stirred, and the sailors sat idle on deck or amongst the rigging. There was music and song on board; and, as darkness came on, a hundred colored lanterns were lighted, as if the flags of all nations waved in the air. The little mermaid swam close to the cabin windows; and now and then, as the waves lifted her up, she could look in through clear glass window panes, and see a number of well-dressed people within. Among them was a young prince, the most beautiful of all, with large black eyes; he was

sixteen years of age, and his birthday was being kept with much rejoicing. The sailors were dancing on deck, but when the prince came out of the cabin, more than a hundred rockets rose in the air, making it as bright as day. The little mermaid was so startled that she dived under water; and when she again stretched out her head, it appeared as if all the stars of heaven were falling around her. She had never seen such fireworks before.

After a while, the sails were quickly unfurled, and the noble ship continued her passage; but soon the waves rose higher, heavy clouds darkened the sky, and lightning appeared in the distance. The waves rose mountains high, as if they would have overtopped the mast. To the little mermaid this appeared pleasant sport; not so to the sailors. At length the ship groaned and creaked; the thick planks gave way under the lashing of the sea as it broke over the deck; the mainmast snapped asunder like a reed; the ship lay over on her side, and the water rushed in. The mermaid now perceived that the crew were in danger; even she herself was obliged to be careful to avoid the beams and planks of the wreck which lay scattered on the





water. At one moment it was so pitch dark that she could not see a single object, but a flash of lightning revealed the whole scene; she could see every one who had been on board excepting the prince. When the ship parted, she had seen him sink into the deep waves, and she was glad, for she thought he would now be with her; and then she remembered that human beings could not live in the water,

could be seen. The sun rose up red and glowing from the water, and its beams brought back the hue of health to the prince's cheeks; but his eyes remained closed. The mermaid kissed his high, smooth forehead, and stroked back his wet hair. Presently they came in sight of land. The sea here formed a little bay, in which the water was quite still, but very deep; so she swam with the handsome prince to the beach, which was covered with fine, white sand, and there she laid him in the warm sunshine. The little mermaid swam out from the shore and placed herself between some high rocks that rose out of the water; then she covered her head and neck with the foam of the sea, so that her little face might not be seen, and watched to see what would become of the poor prince. She did not wait long before she saw a young girl approach the spot where he lay. She seemed frightened at first, but only for a moment; then she fetched a number of people, and the mermaid saw that the prince came to life again, and smiled upon those who stood round him. But to her he sent no smile; he knew not that she had saved him. This made her unhappy, and when he was led away into the great building, she dived down sorrowfully into the water, and returned to her father's castle. She had always been silent and thoughtful, and now she was more so.

"If human beings are not drowned," asked the mermaid, "can they live for ever? do they never die as we do here in the sea?"

"Yes," replied the old lady, "they must also die, and their term of life is even shorter than ours. We sometimes live to three hundred years, but when we cease to exist



so that when he got down to her father's palace he would be quite dead. But he must not die. So she dived deeply under the dark waters, rising and falling with the waves, till at length she managed to reach the young prince. She held his head above the water, and let the waves drift them where they would.

In the morning the storm had ceased; but of the ship not a single fragment

ere we only become the foam on the surface of the water, and we have not even a grave down here of those we love. We have not immortal souls, we shall never live again; but, like the green sea-weed, when once it has been cut off, we can never flourish more. Human beings, on the contrary, have a soul which lives for ever, after the body has been turned to dust. But if a

And then the little mermaid went out from her garden, and took the road to the foaming whirlpools, behind which the sorceress lived.

"I know what you want," said the sea witch; "it is very stupid of you, but you shall have your way, and it will bring you to sorrow, my pretty princess. I will prepare a draught for you,



an were to love you so much that you were more to him than his father or mother; and if all his thoughts and all his love were fixed upon you, and the priest placed his right hand in yours, and he promised to be true to you here and hereafter, then his soul would glide into your body and you could obtain a share in the future happiness of mankind.

with which you must swim to land tomorrow before sunrise, and sit down on the shore and drink it. Your tail will then disappear, and shrink up into what mankind call legs; and you will feel great pain, as if a sword were passing through you. But all who see you will say that you are the prettiest little human being they ever saw. You will still have the same floating

gracefulness of movement, and no dancer will ever tread so lightly; but at every step you take it will feel as if you were treading upon sharp knives, and that the blood must flow, and you must give me your voice."

It all happened as the witch said. The prince found her on the shore, and took



her to the palace. She was very soon arrayed in costly robes of silk and muslin, and was the most beautiful creature in the palace; but she was dumb, and could neither speak nor sing.

Finally, the prince was going to be married to the princess of a neighboring

country. When he arrived there in his ship the church bells were ringing, and from the high towers sounded a flourish of trumpets; and soldiers, with flying colors and glittering bayonets, lined the roads through which they passed.

The little mermaid kissed his hand, and felt as if her heart were already broken. His wedding morning would bring death to her, and she would change into foam.

After the wedding they all went on board the ship to rest. The little mermaid leaned her white arms on the edge of the vessel, and looked towards the east for the first ray of the dawn which was to be her death. She saw her sisters rising out of the flood.

"We have given our hair to the witch," said they, "to obtain help for you, that you may not die to-night. She has given us a knife: here it is—see, it is very sharp. Before the sun rises you must plunge it into the heart of the prince; when the warm blood falls upon your feet they will grow together again, and form into a fish's tail, and you will be once more a mermaid."

The little mermaid drew back the crimson curtain of the couch, and beheld the fair bride with her head resting upon the prince's breast. She bent down and kissed his fair brow, then looked at the sky on which the rosy dawn grew brighter and brighter; then she glanced at the knife, and again fixed her eyes on the prince. Then she threw the knife into the sea and plunged in herself. When she opened her eyes, she found herself surrounded by beautiful beings like angels.

"Where am I?" asked she.

"Among the daughters of the air," answered one of them.

The Wild Swans.

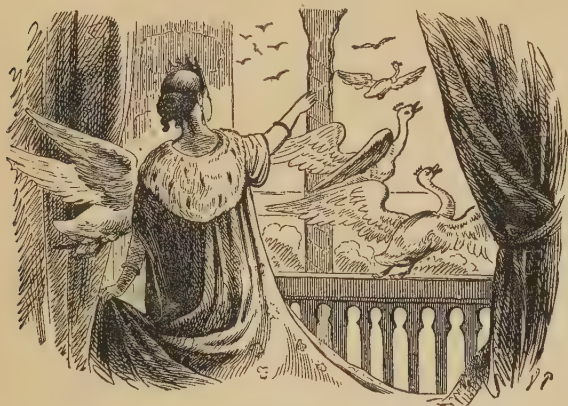
IN a far-off land dwelt a king who had eleven sons and one daughter named Eliza. The king loved his children dearly, and gave them everything that children can wish for, and they were very happy. But this was not always to last. The king married a new wife, for the children's mother was

Then the wicked queen rubbed Eliza's face with walnut juice and tangled her hair, so that her father did not know her, and was very cross and ugly. Only the watch-dog and the swallows knew her, and they could not speak a word. Then Eliza started from the castle to find her brothers. She reached a great wood, and soon lost her way.

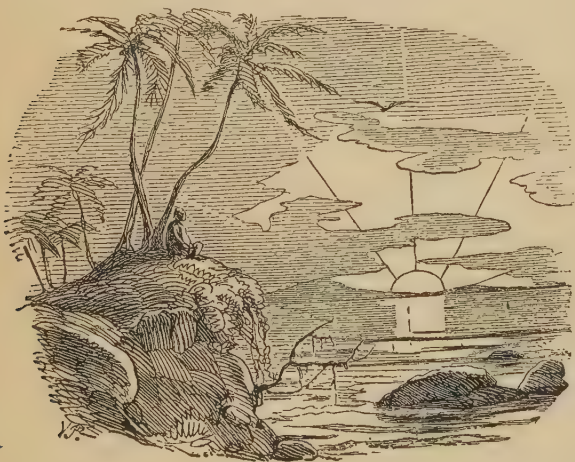


dead. The new Queen hated Eliza and her eleven brothers, and resolved to get rid of them. She was a wicked witch, and she said to the little princes: "Fly away like great birds who have no voice." Then the little princes were changed to eleven white swans and they flew out of the palace windows and away to the forest.

When night came, she lay down on the moss and cried herself to sleep. When it was morning she felt much better and resumed her journey. She came to a clear brook, and when she saw her reflection in it, she was horrified at her ugly appearance. When she had bathed herself, however, she became a beautiful little princess again.



When the sun was about to set, Eliza saw eleven white swans with golden crowns on their heads, flying towards the land, one behind the other, like a long white ribbon. The swans alighted quite close to her, and flapped their great white wings. As soon as the sun had disappeared under the water, the feathers of the swans fell off, and eleven beautiful princes, Eliza's brothers, stood near her. She uttered a loud cry, for, although they were very much changed, she knew them immediately. She sprang into their arms, and called them each by name. Then how happy the princes were at meeting their little sister again, for they recognized her, although she had grown so



tall and beautiful. "We brothers," said the eldest, "fly about as wild swans, so long as the sun is in the sky; but as soon as it sinks behind the hills, we recover our human shape. We do not dwell here, but in a land that lies beyond the ocean. We are permitted to visit our home once every year and to remain eleven days. Tomorrow our time is up, and we must go back and remain for a whole year."

"Take me with you," begged Eliza. So they spent the whole night, weaving a strong net of rushes. In the morning Eliza placed herself upon it; the swans took it



in their beaks and away they flew, till they reached the land where the swans lived, and being very tired they all went to sleep in a cave, on the floor of which the over-grown yet delicate, green creeping plants looked like an embroidered carpet. "Now we shall expect to hear what you dream of to-night," said the youngest brother, as he showed his sister her bedroom.

"Heaven grant that I may dream how to save you," she replied. And this thought took such hold upon her mind that she prayed earnestly to God for help, and even in her sleep she continued to



pray. Then it appeared to her as if she were flying high in the air, towards the cloudy palace of the "Fata Morgana," and a fairy came out to meet her, and said:

"Your brothers can be released, if you have only courage and perseverance. Do

Break them to pieces with your hands and feet, and they will become flax, from which you must spin and weave eleven coats with long sleeves; if these are then thrown over the eleven swans, the spell will be broken. But remember that from the moment you



you see the stinging nettle which I hold in my hand? Quantities of the same sort grow round the cave in which you sleep, but none others will be of any use to you unless they grow upon the graves in a churchyard. These you must gather even while they burn blisters on your hands.

commence your task until it is finished, even should it occupy years of your life, you must not speak. The first word you utter will pierce through the hearts of your brothers like a deadly dagger. Their lives hang upon your tongue. Remember all I have told you? And as she finished

speaking, she touched her hand lightly with the nettle, and a pain, as of burning fire, awoke Eliza.

When Eliza woke, it was broad daylight, and she at once found some nettles and began her task. One coat was finished and the second began, when the King, who was out hunting, found her in the cave.

are beautiful, I will dress you in silk and velvet, I will place a golden crown on your head, and you shall dwell, and rule, and make your home in my richest castle." And then he lifted her on his horse. She wept and wrung her hands, but the king said: "I wish only your happiness. A time will come when you will thank me for this."



"How did you come here, my sweet child?" he asked. But Eliza shook her head. She dared not speak, at the cost of her brothers' lives. And she hid her hands under her apron, so that the king might not see how she must be suffering.

"Come with me," he said; "here you cannot remain. If you are as good as you

And then he galloped away over the mountains, holding her before him on his horse, and the hunters followed behind them. On arriving at the castle, the king led her into marble halls, where large fountains played, and where the walls and the ceilings were covered with rich paintings. But she had no eyes for all these glorious sights, she could



only mourn and weep. She had taken with her the coat and some nettles, and she continued her work. The bishop said she was a witch, because she did not talk, but the King did not listen to him. She had to go to the graveyard every night for nettles, and finally they all came to believe the bishop, and the King consented that she should be burned.

And now all the people came to see the witch burned. An old horse drew the cart on which she sat. They had dressed her in a garment of coarse sackcloth. Her lovely hair hung loose on her shoulders, her cheeks were deadly pale, her lips moved silently, while her fingers still worked at the green flax. Even on the way to death she would not give up her task. The ten coats of mail lay at her feet, she was working hard at the eleventh, while the mob jeered her and said: "See the witch, how she mutters! She has no hymn-book in her hand. She sits there with her ugly sorcery. Let us tear it in a thousand pieces."

And then they pressed towards her, and would have destroyed the coats of mail, but at the same moment eleven wild swans flew over her, and alighted on the cart. Then they flapped their large wings, and the crowd drew on one side in alarm.

As the executioner seized her by the hand, to lift her out of the cart, she hastily threw the eleven coats of mail over the swans, and they immediately became eleven handsome princes. But the youngest had a swan's wing, instead of an arm; for she had not been able to finish the last sleeve.

"Now I may speak," she exclaimed. "I am innocent."

Then the people, who saw what happened, bowed to her, as before a saint; but she sank lifeless in her brothers' arms, overcome with suspense, anguish, and pain.

"Yes, she is innocent," said the eldest brother; and then he related all that had taken place; and while he spoke there rose in the air a fragrance as from millions of roses. Every piece of fagot in the pile had taken root, and threw out branches, and, above all, bloomed a white flower that glittered like a star. This flower the king plucked, and placed in Eliza's bosom, when she awoke from her swoon, with peace and happiness in her heart. And all the church bells rang of themselves, and the birds came in great troops. And a marriage procession returned to the castle, such as no king had ever before seen.





Thumbelina.

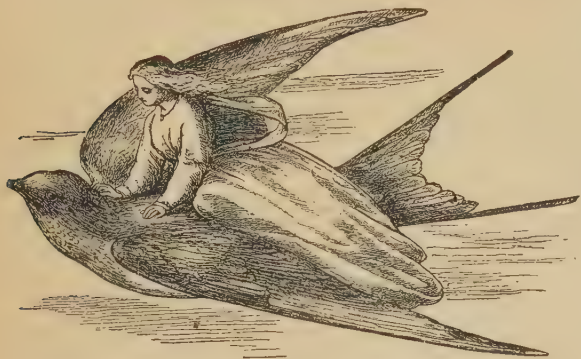
THUMBELINA was but half as big as your thumb. She was born in a tulip, and had half of a walnut shell for a cradle. Her bed was made of violet leaves, with a pink rose leaf for a counterpane. One night, as she lay sleeping, an ugly toad crept in and carried her off to make her marry her ugly son. The toad took her to her home on the bank of a stream; and to keep her safe, she swam out and placed her on a leaf of a water-lily, far out in the stream, while she went to prepare a room for her.

The little fishes, who swam about in the water beneath, had seen the toad, and heard what she said, so they lifted their heads above the water to look at the little maiden. As soon as they caught sight of her, they saw she was very pretty, and it

made them very sorry to think that she must go and live with the ugly toads. "No, it must never be!" so they assembled together in the water, round the green stalk which held the leaf on which the little maiden stood, and gnawed it away at the root with their teeth. Then the leaf floated down the stream, carrying Tiny far away to other lands.

A pretty butterfly came past, and Thumbelina tied her to the leaf with her girdle, and the butterfly dragged her swiftly along. A cockchafer saw her, and seizing her around her slender waist, flew away with her to his tree. Then Thumbelina felt very sorry for the poor butterfly tied to the leaf. The cockchafer who took her away, thought Thumbelina very pretty; but all the lady cockchafers turned up their noses and said she looked too much like a human being to be handsome. So the cockchafer flew down from the tree with her, and put her on a daisy, to let her go where she pleased.

During the whole summer poor little Tiny lived quite alone in the forest. She wove herself a bed with blades of grass, and hung it up under a broad leaf, to protect herself from the rain. She sucked the honey from the flowers for food, and drank the dew from their leaves every morning. So passed away the summer and winter—the long, cold winter. All the birds who had sung to her so sweetly were flown away, and the trees and flowers had withered. The large clover leaf, under the shelter of which she had lived, was now rolled together and shrivelled up; nothing remained but a yellow withered stalk.



She felt dreadfully cold, for her clothes were torn, and she was herself so frail and delicate, that poor little Tiny was nearly frozen to death. She came at last to the door of a field-mouse, who had a little den under the corn-stubble. There dwelt the field-mouse in warmth and comfort, with a whole roomful of corn. Poor little Tiny stood before the door just like a beggar-girl, and begged for a small piece of barley-corn, for she had been without a morsel to eat for two days.

"You poor little creature," said the field-mouse, who was really a good old field-mouse, "come into my warm room and dine with me." She was very pleased with Tiny, so she said: "You are quite welcome to stay with me all the winter, if you like; but you must keep my room clean and neat." And Tiny did all the field-mouse asked her to do, and found herself very comfortable.

An old, blind mole lived close by, and the field-mouse said Thumbelina must be his wife. One day, as they were all taking a walk in one of the dark passages of the mole, they came upon a swallow who seemed to be dead, but when Thumbelina came back to him, she found that he was only benumbed with the cold, so she covered him

with warm wool, till he was restored. In the spring, he flew away. He wanted Thumbelina to go with him, but she said it was not right for her to leave the good field-mouse. When it came winter again, she was to marry the old mole. All summer long she cried about it for she did not like the mole.

One day in the fall, she sat moaning to herself, because the wedding was near, and then she would have to live under ground with the mole. "Oh, that I had gone off with the swallow," said she. "Tweet, tweet," came a voice just over her head, and looking up, she saw the swallow himself. He was probably looking for her, and how pleased he was when he saw her! When she told him about the coming wedding, he begged her again to go away with him, and at last she consented. She sat on his back and away they went to his home far in the south. When they came there he placed her on a beautiful flower, which happened to be the home of the prince of all the flowers. When he saw Thumbelina, he thought her the most beautiful maiden he had ever seen, and when he asked her to marry him she willingly consented. This was much better than being the wife of a toad or a mole.







The Story of the Year.

THE snow covered the fields and the hills and lay deep in the streets and lanes. It whirled in the faces of travellers and fell in great bunches from the housetops. Toward evening it stopped snowing, paths were cleared, and the sparrows came fluttering forth in search of food. "Tweet, tweet," said one, "they call this a New Year, but we might better have kept the old one."

"When will spring come?" asked another.

"When the stork returns, but he is very uncertain, and here in the city they know nothing about him. We will fly away into the country and look for spring."

And away they flew.

In the country it was really winter, a few degrees colder than in the town. The sharp winds blew over the snow-covered fields. The farmer, wrapped in warm clothing, sat in his sleigh, and beat his arms across his chest to keep off the cold. The horses ran till they smoked. The snow crackled, the sparrows hopped about in the wheel-ruts, and shivered, crying: "Tweet, tweet; when will spring come? It is very long in coming."

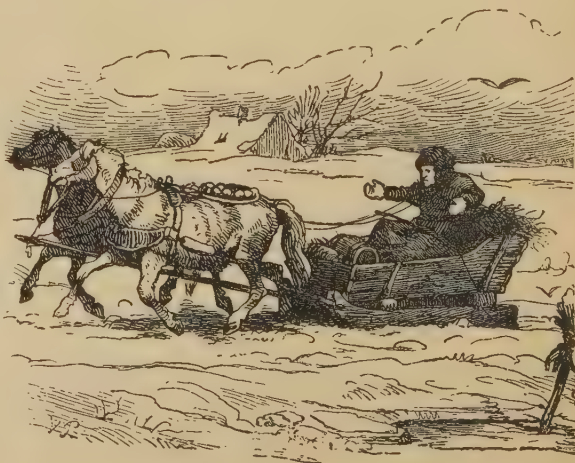
"Very long, indeed," sounded over the field, from the nearest snow-covered hill.

It might have been the echo which people heard, or perhaps the words of that wonderful old man, who sat high on a heap of snow, regardless of wind or weather. He was all in white. He had long, white hair, a pale face, and large clear blue eyes. "Who is that old man?" asked the sparrows.

"I know who he is," said an old raven, who sat on the fence. "It is Winter, the old man of last year; he is not dead yet, as the calendar says, but acts as guardian to little Prince Spring who is coming."

One week passed, and then another. The forest looked dark, the hard-frozen lake lay like a sheet of lead. Large black crows flew about in silence; it was as if nature slept. At length a sunbeam glided over the lake, and it shone like burnished silver. The white form of Winter sat there still, with his unwandering gaze fixed on the south. He did not perceive that the snowy carpet seemed to sink, as it were, into the earth; that here and there a little green patch of grass appeared, and that these patches were covered with sparrows.

"Tee-wit, tee-wit; is spring coming at last?"



Spring! How the cry resounded over field and meadow, and through the dark-brown woods, where the fresh green moss still gleamed on the trunks of the trees; and from the south came the first two storks flying through the air, and on the back of each sat a lovely little child, a boy and a

mist, dark and heavy, that closed over them like a veil. The wind arose with mighty rustling tone, and cleared away the mist. Then the sun shone out warmly. Winter had vanished away, and the beautiful children of Spring sat on the throne.

Wherever the two children wandered



girl. They greeted the earth with a kiss, and wherever they placed their feet white flowers sprang up from beneath the snow. Hand in hand they approached the old ice-man, Winter, embraced him and clung to his breast; and as they did so, in a moment all three were enveloped in a thick, damp

flowers sprang up and the birds sang. They sat down on the green grass, and, holding out each other's hands, they sang and laughed and grew. The gentle rain fell on them, but it only made them happier. How beautiful everything was. Many an old dame came forth and shuffled about

with great delight to find everything growing again.

Days and weeks went by and the girl of Spring had become the wife of Summer. The warm air waved the corn, as it grew golden in the sun. The trees were laden with fruit. Great clouds rolled across the sky, and showers drenched the earth. At last the fruits ripened and the nuts grew

eyes, and her husband stood by her. A gust of wind swept through the foliage, and the leaves fell in a shower. The summer queen was gone, but a butterfly, the last of the year, flew through the cold air. Damp fogs came, icy winds blew. The ruler of the year appeared with hair white as snow, but he knew it not; he thought snow-flakes falling from the sky covered



brown on the trees. The scythes of the reapers gleamed in the harvest fields. The wife of Summer saw the storks fly over, and she grew chilly, and wished to go back with them to the land of her childhood.

The forest leaves became more and more and more yellow, leaf after leaf fell, and the stormy winds of Autumn howled. Upon the fallen, yellow leaves, lay the queen of the year, looking up with mild

his head, as they decked the green fields with a thin, white covering of snow. The ice glittered, the snow crackled, and in the still air old Winter clinched his fists. Then came the sparrows again out of the town and asked: "Who is that old man?" The raven sat there still, or it might be his son, and he answered:

"It is Winter. He is watching for the Spring, which is coming."



Ib and Little Christina.

IB's father was Jeppe Jans, and they lived in the forest that extends along the river Gudenan, in North Jutland. Jeppe Jans cultivated his fields in summer, and in the winter he made wooden shoes. He also had an assistant, a lad who understood as well as he himself did how to make wooden shoes strong, but light, and in the fashion. They carved shoes and spoons, which paid well; therefore no one could justly call Jeppe Jans and his family poor people. Little Ib, a boy of seven years old and the only child, would sit by, watching the workmen, or cutting a stick, and sometimes his finger instead of the stick. But one day Ib succeeded so well in his carving that he made two pieces of wood look really like two little wooden shoes, and he determined to give them as a present to Little Christina.

Little Christina was the boatman's daughter. Her father was a widower, and he made his living, carrying fire-wood to the distant village. As there was no one at home with whom he could leave Little Christina, she was almost always with him in his boat. When he went to town, the

boatman would take Little Christina across the heath to the cottage of Jeppe Jans and leave her to play with Ib till he returned. They were great friends; they divided their bread and berries and agreed in everything.

One day, the boatman let them both go to the village with him, and this was a great event. They sat on the pile of wood in the boat, and enjoyed the sail. In the village, the boatman bought a sucking pig to take home. He put him safely in a basket, and away they went up the river again. The boatman's assistant lived near the bank of the river, and when they came opposite to his house, they pushed the boat to the shore, and the two went up to the house, leaving the children on the boat for half an hour. Then Ib and Little Christina thought they would like to look at the pig, and they took him out of the basket. The pig slipped out of their hands, fell into the water and floated away down the stream.

Ib and little Christina were very much frightened. They both jumped ashore and ran down the stream after the pig; but they soon lost themselves in a thicket, and could not find their way back. They wandered about till it grew dark, and then they lay down on the dry leaves close together and wept till they fell asleep. The sun was high in the heavens when they awoke. Soon out of the thicket came an old woman with three nuts in her hand. She held them out to the children, and told them that they contained most beautiful things, for they were wishing nuts.

"Is there in this nut a carriage, with a pair of horses?" asked Ib.

"Yes, there is a golden carriage, with two golden horses," replied the woman.

"Then give me that nut," said Christina; so Ib gave it to her.

Ib held up another nut. "Is there in this nut a pretty little neckerchief?"

"There are ten neckerchiefs in it," she replied, "as well as beautiful dresses."



The third was a little black thing. "You may keep that one," said Christina.

"What is in it?" asked Ib.

"The best of all things for you," replied the gypsy. So Ib held the nut very tight.

Then the old woman showed them the way home, where they arrived safely. Weeks and months passed. Christina

grew to be a beautiful maiden, and everyone said that Ib and Little Christina would be married when they were old enough. One summer, she went to live with a rich innkeeper's wife in the great town.

One day the boatman came over to the cottage and said that the innkeeper's son wanted to marry Christina. Ib turned very pale at this.

"What the old woman said is coming true," thought he. "She will get all the fine things in the wishing nuts. I cracked mine long ago and found nothing in it, though the old woman said it contained the best of all." Ib was not selfish; so, although he felt very badly that Christina could forget him, he thought it was much better for her.

After a number of years, Jeppe Jans died, and Ib had the farm. One day as he was ploughing in the field, the plough turned out a rich golden armlet. Ib showed it to the clergyman, who said that he had found a Hun's grave, "which is the very best thing you could find," said he, "for there is certainly more treasure there." Ib, in truth, found a number of things of pure gold, all of which he took to Copenhagen, and they brought him a large sum of money. "So there was something in my nut after all," thought he.

One night while he was in Copenhagen, he met a little girl crying bitterly. She said her mamma was dying. Ib followed her to her home, and found his own playmate of the heath on a bed of rags, and with not a morsel to eat. She died that night, and Ib took the new Christina home with him, and in the evenings he would take her on his lap and tell her stories.



The Golden Swan.

A POOR woman was in the wood, gathering firewood. She carried it in a bundle on her back, and in her arms she held her little child. She saw the golden swan, the bird of Fortune, rise from among



the reeds on the shore. What was that that glittered? A golden egg, quite warm yet. She laid it in her bosom, and the warmth remained in it.

At home, in the poor cottage, she took out the egg; "tick, tick," it said, as if it had been a valuable gold watch; but that it

was not, only an egg—a real living egg. The egg cracked and opened, and a dear little baby-swan, all feathered as with the purest gold, put out its little head; round its neck it had four rings, and as the poor woman had four boys—three at home, and the little one that she had with her in the lonely wood—she had a ring to each boy.

One of the boys was playing in a ditch, and took a lump of clay in his hand, turned and twisted and pressed it between his fingers, till it took shape, and he became a great sculptor.

The second boy ran out on the meadow, where the flowers stood—flowers of all imaginable colors; he gathered a handful and squeezed them so tight that all the juice spurted out into his eyes, and some of it wetted the ring. It cribbled and crawled in his thoughts, and in his hands, and after many a day people in the great city talked of the great painter.

The third child had the ring so tight in his teeth that it gave forth sound, an echo of the song in the depth of his heart. Thoughts and feelings rose in beautiful sounds; rose like singing swans; plunged, like swans, into the deep, deep sea. He became a great master, a great musician.

And the fourth little one was the "ugly duck" of the family; they said he had the pip, and must have pepper and butter, like the little sick chickens, and that he got; but he got kisses too, and he was a poet, and was buffeted and kissed, alternately, all his life. But he held what no one could take from him—the Ring from Dame Fortune's golden swan. His thoughts took wings, and flew up and away, like singing butterflies—the emblem of immortality!



The Daisy.

A DAISY lived just on the edge of a garden. Inside the palings grew some gaudy peonies, and proud lilies. The daisy did not think to envy them, but was very happy. The larks sang overhead, and the daisy listened but was quite content to stay in the grass where it was. When a

lark flew down to the daisy and said: "O, what a beautiful flower!" the peonies grew redder with anger, and the tulips lifted their heads in proud disdain. Just then a girl came into the garden with a pair of shears, and cut off every tulip and peony.

The next morning, the daisy heard a mournful "tweet, tweet," and looking up saw the lark, imprisoned in a cage. The boys had caught him, but they had gone off and left him without a drop of water, and the pretty bird was nearly dead from thirst. When the boys came back, they cut up a piece of the turf with the daisy in the centre to give to the lark. "Pull out the daisy," said one. "No!" said the other, "the lark may like it." When the lark found the modest daisy in his cage he kissed it with his beak, and sang softly.





Thick-headed Jack.

A RICH country squire had two sons, who both wished to marry the king's daughter. She had given out publicly that she would marry the man who could give the readiest answer. One of the brothers knew the Latin dictionary by heart, and the other knew all about law. Their father gave each of them a beautiful horse, and they set out to the house of the princess. Just as they were starting, the youngest brother came up. He was never counted with his brothers because he was so dull. He was called Thick-headed Jack.

"Hallo!" cried Jack; "where are you off to?"

"To the king's palace. Don't you know what all the world knows?" and they told him the whole story.

"My gracious! I shall come too," cried he. The brothers laughed scornfully and rode away.

"Daddy," cried Jack, "I must have a horse. If you only knew what a hurry I'm in to get married!"

"Hold your foolish tongue!" cried his father. "You shall have no horse. You

can't phrase your words properly. You and your brothers are different beings."

"Well," cried Jack, "if I can't have a horse, I'll take the old goat. It belongs to me." So said, so done. He mounted the old goat, and off he was down the turnpike road like a storm wind.

His brothers were riding slowly; neither spoke, lest he should forget the things he had learned to say to the princess.

"Hallo!" cried Thick-headed Jack, "I'm coming. Just look what I've found on the road!" and he showed them a dead crow.

"Blockhead!" cried his brothers. "What are you going to do with that?"

"Going to give it to the princess."

"You had better!" said his brothers.

"Hallo! Look what I have found now."

"Blockhead!" they cried; "it is nothing but an old wooden shoe. Are you going to give that to the princess?"

"Perhaps I may," said Thick-headed Jack. The brothers laughed and rode on; they were now a long way in advance. "Hop-pity-hop! Here I come!" cried Jack. "Look here, better and better!"

"What have you got now?" asked the brothers.

"Oh, I could not tell you," cried Thick-headed Jack; "it is *too* grand!"

"Oh, fie!" cried the brothers; "why, that is mud, nothing but mud out of the gutter."

"So it is," cried Jack; "the very finest sort;" and he filled his pocket with the mud.

The brothers galloped away till the sparks flew right and left; they reached the town-gate earlier than Thick-headed Jack.

All the people of the land stood in crowds round the palace windows to see the princess receive her suitors. As soon as any of

them entered the hall where she was, his speech went out like a candle.

"He is no good," cried the king's daughter; "out with him!"

At last it came to the turn of the brother who knew the Latin dictionary, but he had forgotten every word.

"It's awfully hot here," said he.

"Yes, indeed; but my father is roasting some chickens to-day."

"Ahem! ahem!" There he stood like a simpleton. He had never expected such a conversation as this; and he had not a word to say. He would have liked to say something very witty—"Ahem!"

"He is no good," said the king's daughter. "Out with him." And out he had to go. The other brother came in.

"It's awfully hot here," he said.

"Yes, indeed; we are roasting chickens."

"How—do—how?" he began.

"He is no good," said the king's daughter; "send him away." Then came Thick-headed Jack, galloping, goat and all, straight into the room. "Puff! it's murdering hot," he cried.

"Yes, indeed; but I am roasting chickens."

"Oh! then I can roast my crow."

"With pleasure," said the princess. "But have you anything to roast it in?"

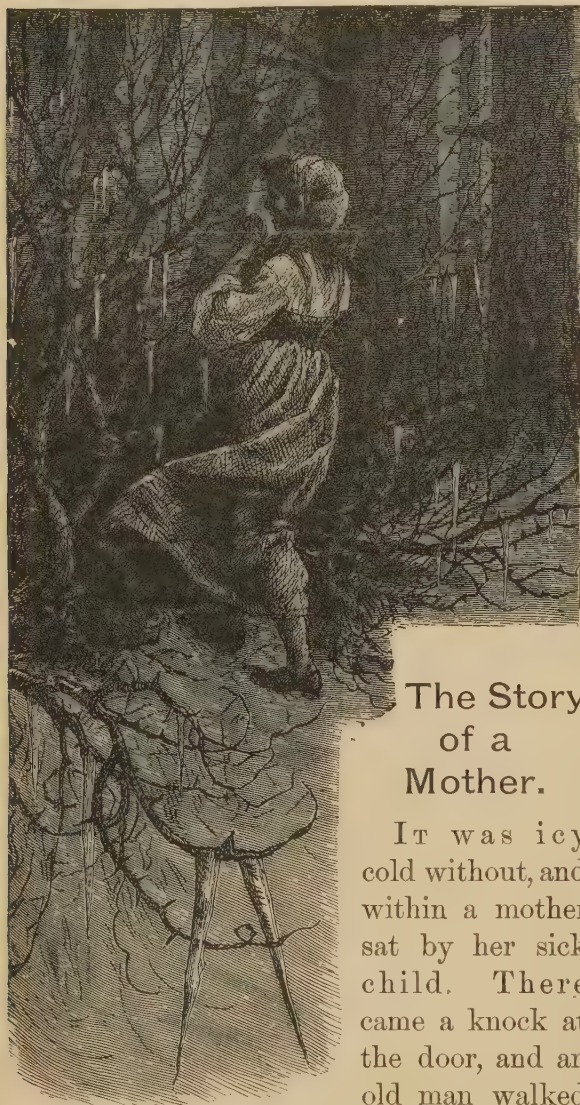
"I have, though," said Jack. "Here is a cooking utensil." He took out the old wooden shoe and put the crow inside it.

"That is a regular meal," said the princess; "but where shall we get soup?"

"I've got that in my pocket," said Jack.

"Now, I like that," said the princess. "You have an answer ready, and you can speak. I choose you for my husband!"





The Story of a Mother.

IT WAS icy cold without, and within a mother sat by her sick child. There came a knock at the door, and an old man walked in and sat down by the cradle. The mother had not slept for three days and three nights, and now she nodded just for a minute. When she awoke, the old man was gone, and so was her child. The old man was Death.

Out in the snow rushed the mother. It was very dark and very cold. A woman sat in the mother's path, of whom she inquired if she had seen an old man taking

away a child. "Yes," said the woman, "I saw him. I am Night. If you will sing me all the songs you sang to the child, I will tell you which way he went." So the mother, as she wept, sang all the songs, and the woman showed her a path into a deep fir-forest.

The mother went on till she came to a great lake on which was neither ship nor boat. She wrung her hands in agony, and the lake said: "If you will weep away your eyes, in my waters, I will take you to Death's home." So she wept her eyes into the lake and they became great pearls. Then the lake wafted her to a beautiful garden in which were many plants, and an old white-haired woman tending them.

"Oh, tell me where to find my child," said the mother.

"Death has not yet arrived," said the old woman. "When he comes you can recognize your child. Every human being has a life plant growing here. When they die they are transplanted to another garden. If you will give me your beautiful hair and take my white hair I will tell you more."

So the mother exchanged her hair for the white hair of the old woman, and she led her to a little flower in which her child's heart was still beating. Then there rushed through the garden an icy chillness, and the mother knew that Death had arrived.

"How did you find your way?" asked he; "how could you come faster than I?"

"I am a mother," she answered.

And Death stretched out his hand toward the delicate little flower; but she held her hands tightly round it. Then Death breathed upon her hands, and her hands sank down powerless.



"You cannot prevail against me," said he.

"But a God of mercy can," said she.

"I only do His will," replied Death. "I am His gardener. I take all His flowers and trees, and transplant them into the gardens of Paradise in an unknown land.

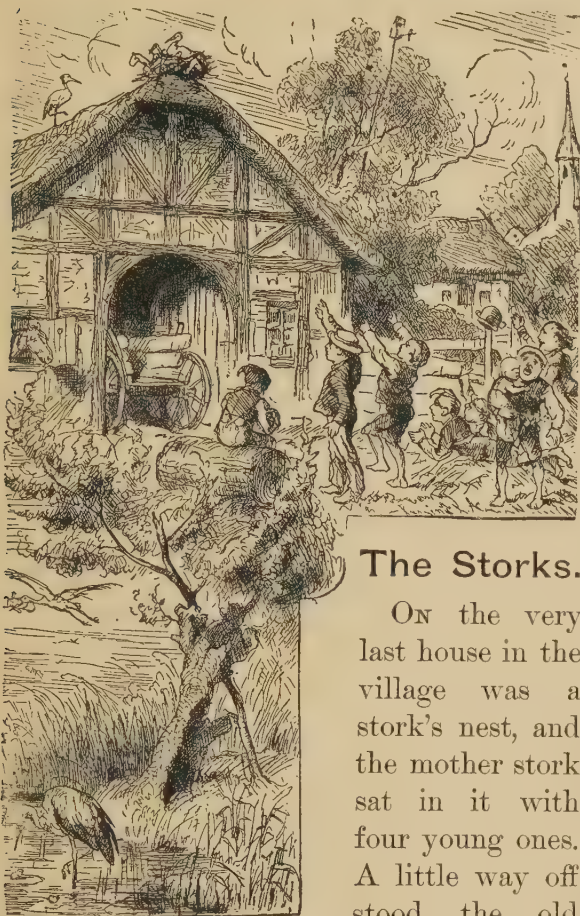
them back—they are clearer now than before—and then look into the deep well which is close by here. I will tell you the names of the two flowers which you wished to pull up; and you will see the whole future of the human beings they represent.



"Give me back my child," said the mother, weeping and imploring; and she seized two beautiful flowers in her hands.

"Do not touch them," said Death. "Would you make another mother as unhappy as yourself? There are your eyes. I fished them up out of the lake for you. Take

Then she looked into the well; and it was a glorious sight to behold how one of them became a blessing to the world, and how much happiness and joy it spread around. But the life of the other was full of care and misery. "That life of care," said Death, "belonged to your child."



The Storks.

ON the very last house in the village was a stork's nest, and the mother stork sat in it with four young ones. A little way off stood the old father stork, quite upright and stiff, on one leg, for he thought that looked more grand and aristocratic than to stand on both legs like other birds.

In the street below were a number of children at play, and when they caught sight of the storks, one of the boldest amongst the boys began to sing a song about them, and very soon he was joined by the rest:

"Stork, stork, fly away,
Stand not on one leg, I pray;
See your wife is in her nest,
With her little ones at rest.
They will hang one,
And fry another;
They will shoot a third,
And roast his brother."

"Just hear what those young boys are singing," said the young storks; "they say we shall be hanged and roasted."

"Never mind what they say; you need not listen," said the mother.

But the boys went on singing and pointing at the storks, and mocking at them. The mother stork comforted her young ones, and told them not to mind. "See," she said, "how quiet your father stands, although he is only on one leg."

The next day, when the children were playing together, and saw the storks, they sang the same song again—

"They will hang one,
And roast another."

"Shall we be hanged and roasted?" asked the young storks.

"No, certainly not," said the mother. "I will teach you to fly, and when you have learnt, we will fly into the meadows, and pay a visit to the frogs, who will bow themselves to us in the water, and cry 'Croak, croak,' and then we shall eat them up; that will be fun."

"And what next?" asked the young storks.

"Then," replied the mother, "all the storks in the country will assemble together, and go through their autumn manœuvres; so that it is very important for every one to know how to fly properly. After the great review is over, we shall fly away to Egypt, where there is a river that overflows its banks, and then goes back, leaving nothing but mire; there we can walk about, and eat frogs in abundance."

"Oh, o—h!" cried the young storks.

"Yes, it is a delightful place; there is nothing to do all day long but eat, and

while we are so well off out there, in this country there will not be a single green leaf on the trees, and the weather will be so cold that the clouds will freeze, and fall on the earth in little white rags."

"Will the naughty boys freeze and fall in pieces?" asked the young storks.

"No, but they will be very cold, and be obliged to sit all day in a dark, gloomy room, while we shall be flying about where there are flowers and warm sunshine."

Time passed on, and the young storks grew so large that they could stand upright in the nest and look about them. The father brought them, every day, beautiful frogs, little snakes, and all kinds of stork-dainties that he could find.

"Come," said the mother one day, "now you must learn to fly." And all the four

young ones were obliged to come out on the top of the roof.

"Look at me," said the mother; "you must hold your heads in this way, and place your feet so."

Then she flew a little distance from them, and the young ones made a spring to follow her; but down they fell plump, for their bodies were still too heavy.

"I don't want to fly," said one of the young storks, creeping back into the nest.

"Would you like to stay here and freeze when the winter comes?" said the mother; "or till the boys come to hang you, or to roast you?—Well then, I'll call them."

"Oh no, no!" said the young stork, jumping out on the roof with the others; and now they were all attentive, and by the third day could fly a little. The boys



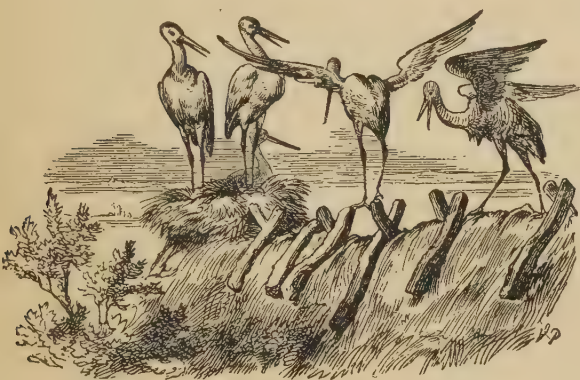
came again in the street singing their song.

"Shall we fly down, and pick their eyes out?" asked the young storks.

"No; leave them alone," said the mother. "Listen to me; that is much more important. Now then. One—two—three. Now to the right. One—two—three. Now to the left, round the chimney. There now, that was very good."

"But may we not punish those naughty boys?" asked the young storks.

"No; let them scream away as much as they like."



"We will revenge ourselves," whispered the young storks to each other. They were very angry, and grew worse as they grew older; so at last their mother was obliged to promise that they should be revenged, but not until the day of their departure.

As soon as the autumn arrived, all the storks began to assemble together before taking their departure for warm countries during the winter. Then the review commenced. They flew over forests and villages to show what they could do, for they had a long journey before them. The



young storks performed their part so well that they received a mark of honor, with frogs and snakes as a present.

"Now let us have our revenge," they cried.

"Yes, certainly," cried the mother stork. "I have thought upon the best way to be revenged. I know where all the little children lie, waiting till the storks come to take them to their parents. All parents are glad to have a little child, and children are so pleased with a little brother or sister. Now we will fly away, to fetch a baby for each of the children that did not sing the naughty song."





Little Claus and Big Claus.

IN a village there once lived two men who were both called Claus. One of them had four horses, but the other had only one; so to distinguish them, people called the owner of the four horses, "Great Claus," and he who had only one, "Little Claus."

Through the whole week, Little Claus was obliged to plough for Great Claus, and lent him his one horse; and once a week, on a Sunday, Great Claus lent him all his four horses. Then how Little Claus would smack his whip over all five horses and say: "Gee-up, my five horses."

"You must not say that," said Big Claus; "for only one of them belongs to you." But Little Claus would call out, "Gee-up, my five horses!"

"Now I must beg of you not to say that again," said Big Claus; "for if you do, I shall hit your horse on the head, so that he will drop dead."

"I promise you I will not say it any more," said the other; but as soon as people came by, nodding to him, and wishing him "Good day," he became so pleased that he cried out again, "Gee-up, all my horses!"

"I'll gee-up your horses for you," said Big Claus; and, seizing a hammer, he

struck the one horse of Little Claus on the head, and he fell dead.

"Oh, now I have no horse at all," said Little Claus, weeping. But after a while he took off the dead horse's skin, and hung the hide to dry in the wind. Then he put the dry skin into a bag, and, placing it over his shoulder, went into the next town to sell the horse's skin.

At night, he lost his way and stopped at a house for a lodging. But the woman said her husband was away and she shut the door in his face. Close to the house was a shed with a thatched roof, and Little Claus climbed up there for a night's sleep. From the top of the shed he could look into the window, and there he saw





the woman having a grand feast with the sexton. Now, the husband hated the sexton, so this one had called while he was away. Pretty soon the husband was heard coming down the road. The woman hid the sexton in a chest, hid the wine behind the door, and the roast meat she put back into the oven.

The man heard Little Claus on the shed

The skin squeaked again, and Little Claus said it told him that there was wine behind the door. When the man looked and found both the meat and wine, he gave Little Claus a bushel of money for the bag. Claus said he must have the chest, too, so he gave him that, and with the money and the chest on his wheelbarrow, Little Claus went on his way.

He would not let the sexton go till he gave him another bushel of money, and now that he had so much he went home.

When Great Claus asked him where he got all his money, he said: "Why, I sold the horse's skin." Then Great Claus took a hammer and killed all of his four horses, skinned them and took their skins to the town to sell them. When the shoemakers asked him the price, he said a bushel of money for each. The shoemakers thought he was making sport of them, and they took off their aprons and belts, and beat him out of the town.



and he made him come down and invited him in to supper; but the woman gave them only porridge. Little Claus did not like this, so he stepped on his dried skin and it squeaked.

"What have you got in the bag?" asked the man.

"Only a conjurer," said Little Claus.

"And what does he say?"

"He says there is meat in the oven."

Great Claus was very angry at Little Claus for getting him into such a scrape. He went home and tied Little Claus in a bag, and started for the river to drown him. On the way he passed a church, and as his conscience hurt him, he stopped for a few moments, putting down the bag in the road, and went into the church to pray. A little drover came along the road, driving a great herd of cattle. He was bemoan-



ing his lot, and wishing he was in heaven. "Get into this bag," shouted Little Claus, "and you will be there in half an hour. I was on the way myself."

The drover let Little Claus out of the bag and got in himself, first charging Little Claus to take the cattle and keep them. Great Claus came out of the church, took the bag to the bridge and threw it into the river. On his way back he met Little Claus driving home his cattle.

"Hello!" said he, "didn't I drown you in the river?"

"Oh, yes!" said Little Claus, "or you thought you did."

"How did you come here, and where did you get the cattle?"

"These are sea-cattle," said Little Claus; "I found them all in the bottom of the river. It was a piece of great luck for me to be drowned."

"What a lucky fellow you are!" exclaimed Great Claus. "Do you think I should get

any sea-cattle if I went down to the bottom of the river?"

"Yes, I think so," said Little Claus. "If you will go there first, and creep into a sack, I will throw you in with the greatest pleasure."

"Thank you," said Great Claus; but remember, if I do not get any sea-cattle down there I shall come up again and give you a good thrashing."

"No, now, don't be too fierce about it!" said Little Claus.

"Put in a stone," said Great Claus, "or I may not sink."

"Oh there's not much fear of that," he replied; still he put a large stone into the bag, and then tied it tightly, and gave it a push.

"Plump!" In went Great Claus, and immediately sank to the bottom of the river.





The Elfin Hill.

THERE was a great buzzing and rumbling in the Elfin Hill. There was to be a ball, and all the demons, and imps, and hobgoblins, the merman and his daughter, the grave-pig and death-horse were all invited, and the raven carried the invitations. The old goblin of Norway was coming with his two sons to select wives from the seven elfin maidens, who were already dancing with their shawls made of moonlight and mist.

Two will-o'-the-wisps came running in crying "Here they come! here they come!"

"Give me my crown," said the elf king, "and let me stand in the moonshine."

The daughters drew on their shawls and bowed down to the ground. There stood the old goblin from the Dovre Mountains, with his crown of hardened ice and polished fir-cones. Besides this, he wore a bear-skin, and great warm boots.

"Is that a hill?" said the youngest of the boys. "We should call it a hole, in Norway."

"Take care," said the old man, "or people will think you have not been well brought up."

Then they entered the elfin hill, where the grand company were assembled, and so quickly had they appeared that they seemed to have blown together. They all behaved very well, except the two young goblins, who were not at all polite.

Then the elfin girls had to dance, first in the usual way, and then with stamping feet, which they performed very well; then followed the artistic and solo dance. Dear me, how they did throw their legs about! No one could tell where the dance begun, or where it ended, nor indeed which were legs and which were arms, for they were all flying about together, like the shavings in a saw-pit!

"Stop!" cried the old goblin, "is that the only housekeeping they can perform? Can they do anything more than dance and throw about their legs?"

"You shall see what they can do," said the elf king. And then he called his youngest daughter to him. She took a white chip in her mouth, and vanished instantly; this was her accomplishment. But the old goblin said he should not like his wife to have such an accomplishment, and thought his boys would have the same objection. Another daughter could make a figure like herself follow her, as if she had a shadow, which none of the goblin folk ever had. The third had learnt in the brew-house of the moor witch how to lard elfin puddings with glow-worms. The fourth daughter played on a harp, and when she played everybody had to do just as she wished. "This will not do at all," said the old goblin, and the two sons left the room and walked out on the hill.

The fifth daughter declared that she could

do everything that was done in Norway, and she would never marry till she could go there. This quite abashed the next elfin, so that she could not come forward at all.

None of these suited the old goblin, till he came to the seventh; and what could she

such a sweet love story that he declared, since his sons had taken themselves off, that he would marry her himself. Then the elfin girl said that the story of the other finger had not been told.

"We will hear it in the winter," said the



do? Why, she could tell stories, as many as you liked.

"Here are my five fingers," said the old goblin; "tell me a story for each of them."

So she sat down and told him beautiful stories; and when she came to the fourth finger, on which was a ring, she told him

goblin. I will take you to my home in Norway, and there you shall tell all your tales. And when Nix comes to visit us she will sing all the mountain songs."

"The cock is crowing," said the old elfin maiden who acted as housekeeper; "now we must close the shutters."

The Drop of Water.

THERE was an old magician whom the people called Kribble-Krabble, because he would have his own way. He sat one day looking through his magnifying glass at a drop of water. The water was full of little creatures, which through the glass appeared a thousand times as big as they really were. And how they Kribble-Krab-

tures all look pink. It looked really like a great town reflected there, in which all the people were running about without clothes! It was terrible! But it was still more terrible to see how one beat and pushed the other, and bit and hacked, and tugged and mauled him. Those who were at the top were being pulled down, and those at the bottom were struggling upwards.



bled! chasing each other about, fighting and biting each other at a great rate.

"What have you there?" asked another old magician, who had no name.

"Guess," said Kribble-Krabble, "and I'll make you a present of it." The magician who had no name looked through the glass. He had put a drop of coloring matter in the water, which made the crea-

"That's funny!" said the magician.

"Yes; but what do you think it is?" said Kribble-Krabble. "Can you find that out?" "Why, one can see that easily enough," said the other. "That's Paris or some other great city, for they're all alike. It's a great city!"

"It's only puddle water!" said Kribble-Krabble.



The Ugly Duckling.

AN old duck was sitting on her nest, waiting for her brood to hatch. She was getting very tired, when one day the shells began to crack, and one after another the young ducks began to stick their heads out and cry: "Peep, peep." The old duck sat on, for the largest egg of all had not yet hatched. "Well, how are you getting on?" asked an old duck, who paid her a visit.

"One egg is not hatched yet," said the duck.

"Let me see the egg that will not break," said the old duck; "I have no doubt it is a turkey's egg. I was persuaded to hatch some once, and after all my care and trouble with the young ones, they were afraid of the water. Yes, that is a turkey's egg; take my advice, leave it where it is, and teach the other children to swim."

"I think I will sit on it a little while longer," said the duck; "as I have sat so long already."

"Please yourself," said the old duck, and she went away.

At last the large egg broke, and a young one crept forth, crying: "Peep,

peep." It was very large and ugly. The duck stared at it, and exclaimed: "It is very large, and not at all like the others. I wonder if it really is a turkey. We shall soon find it out, however." She took them directly to the water, and the ugly duckling plunged in and swam as well as the rest.

But the little thing was so ugly that the others all fought it, and took its food away, and as it grew, its life became a burden. Finally, he could stand it no longer and he ran away and went to a moor where the wild ducks were, who treated him very well. In a few days some sportsmen came with their dogs, and there was a great fluttering



among the ducks. Many of them were shot, and the ugly duckling was so frightened that he crept under some rushes and stayed all day and all night.

The next morning he resolved to leave the moor. He was very hungry, and when he came to a little cottage with the door a little open he went in. An old woman and a cat and a hen lived in the cottage. The

door and started to look for a pond or a river. As he flapped his wings, he was surprised to feel how strong they were. Some beautiful birds flew over his head, and he longed to go with them. They were swans, but he did not know that, but he had never felt so strange a liking for any other birds. He flapped his wings again, and almost before he knew it he was



old woman seemed glad to see him, and gave him some food directly, and he sat down in the corner, quite contented. In a few days he felt a longing for a swim in the cool water. He mentioned it to the cat and the hen, and they laughed at him. "Did you ever hear of such a thing?" said they; "he must be crazy."

But one morning when nobody was looking the duckling crept slyly out of the

sailing through the air. He flew till he came to a large pond in a garden, where he saw some of the beautiful birds with the long necks swimming. He lit on the water right among them. He thought they would surely fight him like the ducks, but they didn't; they came around him with every manifestation of joy. Some little children clapped their hands and cried: "Oh, here is a new swan."





The Angel.

"WHEN a good child dies, an angel flies with him over all the places he has loved during life. Then he gathers a handful of flowers and takes them to heaven, that they may bloom more brightly."

These words were spoken by an angel of God, as he carried a dead child up to heaven. As they passed over the beautiful gardens where the child had played, the angel said: "Which of these flowers shall we take to heaven with us?" Close by grew a slender rose-bush, but some wicked hand had broken the stem, and the buds were withered. "Let us take the poor rose-bush with us," said the child.

The angel took up the rose-bush; then he kissed the child, and the little one half-opened his eyes. The angel gathered also some beautiful flowers, as well as a few humble buttercups and heart's-ease.

"Now we have flowers enough," said the child; but the angel only nodded; he did not fly upward to heaven.

It was night, and quite still in the great town. The angel hovered over a small, narrow street, in which lay a large heap of straw, ashes, and sweepings. There lay fragments of plates, pieces of plaster, rags, old hats, and other rubbish not pleasant to see. Amidst all this confusion, the angel pointed to the pieces of a broken flower-pot, and to a lump of earth which had fallen out of it. The earth had been kept from fall-

ing to pieces by the roots of a withered flower.

"We will take this with us," said the angel; "I will tell you why as we fly along.

"Down in that narrow lane, in a low cellar, lived a poor sick boy; he had been afflicted from his childhood, and even in his best days he could just manage to walk up and down the room on crutches once or twice, but no more. During some days in summer, the sunbeams would lie on the floor of the cellar for about half an hour.



in this spot the poor sick boy would sit warming himself in the sunshine. Then he would say he had been out, yet he knew nothing of the green forest in its spring verdure, till a neighbor's son brought him a green bough from a beech-tree. This he would place over his head, and fancy that he was in the beech-wood while the sun shone, and the birds caroled gaily. One spring day the neighbor's boy brought him some field-flowers, and among them was one to which the root still adhered. This he carefully planted in a flower-pot, and placed in a window-seat near his bed. And the flower grew, put forth fresh shoots, and blossomed every year. It became a splendid flower-garden to the sick boy, and his little treasure upon earth. He watered it, and cherished it,

and took care it should have the benefit of every sunbeam that found its way into the cellar. The flower entwined itself even in his dreams; and to the flower he turned, even in death, when the Lord called him. He has been one year with God. During that time the flower has stood in the window, withered and forgotten, till at length cast out among the sweepings into the street. And this poor flower, withered and faded as it is, we have added to our nosegay, because it gave more real joy than the most beautiful flower in the garden of a queen."

"But how do you know all this?" asked the child.

"I know it," said the angel, "because I myself was the poor sick boy who walked upon crutches."





The Brave Tin Soldier.

THERE were once five-and-twenty tin soldiers, who were all brothers, for they had been made out of the same old tin spoon. They shouldered arms and looked straight before them, and wore a splendid uniform, red and blue. The first thing in the world they ever heard were the words, "Tin soldiers!" uttered by a little boy, who clapped his hands with delight when the lid of the box, in which they lay, was taken off. The soldiers were all exactly alike, excepting one, who had only one leg; he had been left to the last, and then there was not enough tin to finish him, so they made him to stand firmly on one leg.

The table was covered with other playthings, but the prettiest of all was a tiny little lady made of paper. She was a dancer, and she stretched out both her arms, and raised one of her legs so high, that the tin soldier thought that she, like himself, had only one leg. "That is the wife for me," he thought. Then he laid

himself behind the snuff-box, so he could peep at the little lady. When evening came, the people of the house went to bed. Then the playthings began to have their own games together, to pay visits, to have sham fights, and to give balls. The nut-crackers played at leap-frog, and the pencil jumped about the table. Only the tin soldier and the dancer remained in their places. She stood on tip-toe, with her arms stretched out, as firmly as he did on his one leg. The clock struck twelve, and, with a bounce, up sprang the lid of the snuff-box; but, instead of snuff, there jumped up a little black goblin.

"Tin soldier," said the goblin, "don't wish for what does not belong to you."

When the children came in the next morning, they placed the tin soldier in the window. Now, whether it was the goblin who did it, or the draught, is not known, but the window flew open, and out fell the tin soldier, heels over head, from the third story, into the street beneath. It



was a terrible fall; for he came head downwards, his helmet and his bayonet stuck in between the flagstones, and his one leg up in the air. The servant-maid



and the little boy went downstairs directly to look for him; but he was nowhere to be seen, although once they nearly trod upon him.

Presently there was a heavy shower. When it was over, two boys happened to pass by, and one of them said, "Look, there is a tin soldier. He ought to have a boat to sail in."

So they made a boat out of a newspaper, and placed the tin soldier in it, and sent him sailing down the gutter, while the two boys ran by the side of it, and clapped their hands. Good gracious, what large waves arose in that gutter! and how fast the stream rolled on! The paper boat rocked up and down, and turned itself round sometimes so quickly that the tin soldier trembled; yet he remained firm; his countenance did not change; he looked straight before, and shouldered his musket. Suddenly the boat shot under the bridge which formed part of a drain, and then it was as dark as the tin soldier's box.

"Where am I going now?" thought he.

Suddenly there appeared a great water-rat, who lived in the drain.

"Have you a passport?" asked the rat; "give it to me at once." But the tin sol-

dier remained silent and held his musket tighter than ever. The boat sailed on and the stream rushed on stronger and stronger. The tin soldier could already see daylight shining where the arch ended. Then he heard a roaring sound. At the end of the tunnel the drain fell into a large canal over a steep place. He was too close to it to stop, so the boat rushed on, and the poor tin soldier could only hold himself as stiffly as possible, without moving an eyelid, to show that he was not afraid.

Then the boat fell to pieces, and the soldier was swallowed by a great fish, which was caught, taken to the market and sold to the cook. She cut him open and cried out: "Oh, here is the tin soldier." She took him into the same room, and put him on the same table; and there was the elegant little dancer still balancing herself on one leg, and everything was just as he had left it.





The Nightingale.

A LONG time ago the emperor of China had a beautiful palace, built entirely of porcelain. It was so delicate and brittle that whoever touched it had to take care. All about it was a garden filled with the rarest flowers. The garden extended so far that even the gardener himself did not know where it stopped. But the fishermen knew that beyond it was a noble forest sloping down to the sea, and that in one of the trees lived a nightingale that sang sweetly to them every night.

Strangers came to China from all parts of the world, and when they went home they wrote books, describing all the beautiful things; but they all ended by saying: "The nightingale is the most beautiful of all." One of these books fell into the emperor's hands. He was much pleased with all the praises; but when he came to the part telling of the nightingale, he was much surprised. "What is this?" said he; "Have I such a bird in my empire? I have never heard of it."

Then he called one of his lords-in-waiting.

"There is a very wonderful bird mentioned here, called a nightingale," said the emperor; "they say it is the best thing in

my large kingdom. Why have I not been told of it?"

"I have never heard the name," replied the cavalier; "she has not been presented at court."

"It is my pleasure that she shall appear this evening," said the emperor.

But where was the nightingale to be found? The nobleman went upstairs and down, through halls and passages; yet none of those whom he met had heard of the bird.

"But I will hear the nightingale," said the emperor; "she must be here this evening; and if she does not come the whole court shall be trampled upon after supper is ended."

"Tsing-pe!" cried the lord-in-waiting, and again he ran up and down stairs; and half the court ran with him, for they did not like the idea of being trampled upon.

At last they met with a poor little girl in the kitchen, who said: "Oh, yes, I know the nightingale quite well."

"Little maiden," said the lord-in-waiting, you shall have permission to see the emperor dine, if you will lead us to the nightingale." So she went into the wood, and half the court followed her.

"Hark, hark! there she is," said the girl.

"Is it possible?" said the lord-in-waiting; "I never imagined it would be a little, plain, simple thing like that."

"My excellent little nightingale," said the courtier, "I have the great pleasure of inviting you to a court festival this evening, where you will gain imperial favor by your charming song."

"My song sounds best in the green



wood," said the bird; but still she came willingly.

The palace was elegantly decorated for the occasion. The walls and floors of porcelain glittered in the light of a thousand lamps. Beautiful flowers, round which little bells were tied, stood in the corridors: what with the running to and fro and the draught, these bells tinkled so loudly that no one could speak to be heard. In the centre of the great hall, a golden perch had been fixed for the nightingale to sit on. The whole



court was present, and the little kitchen-maid had received permission to stand by the door. The nightingale sang so sweetly that the tears came into the emperor's eyes; and then rolled down his cheeks, as her song became still more touching and went to every one's heart. The emperor was so delighted that he declared the nightingale should have his gold slipper to wear round her neck, but she declined the honor with thanks; she had been sufficiently rewarded already. "I have seen tears in an em-

peror's eyes," she said: "that is my richest reward."

Now, the whole city rang with praises of the bird. Everybody talked of her. She was put in a golden cage, and was allowed to fly out every day, accompanied by twelve ladies-in-waiting who held silken cords attached to her feet. One day the emperor received from Japan a present of a golden bird that was covered with diamonds and gems. It was made to wind up like a clock, and then it would sing like the nightingale. They all said it sang better than the nightingale; but an old fisherman said its song was very pretty, but it lacked something—he could not tell what.

The emperor and the court now fell in love with the new golden bird, and the nightingale was allowed to fly away out of the window. One evening, when the artificial bird was singing its best, something inside sounded "whizz." Then a spring cracked. "Whir-r-r-r" went all the wheels, and then the music stopped. The emperor immediately called for his physician; but what could he do? Then they sent for a watch-maker; and, after a great deal of talking, the bird was put into something like order; but he said that it must be used very carefully. Now there was great sorrow, as the bird could only be allowed to play once a year, and even that was dangerous for the works inside.

Five years passed, and then a real grief came upon the land. Cold and pale lay the emperor in his royal bed; the whole court thought he was dead, and every one ran away to pay homage to his successor. But the emperor was not yet dead. A

window stood open, and the moon shone in upon the artificial bird. The poor emperor, finding he could scarcely breathe with a strange weight on his chest, opened his eyes, and saw Death sitting there. All around the bed were a number of strange heads, some very ugly, and others lovely and gentle-looking. These were the emperor's good and bad deeds, which stared him in the face.

"Sing," said the emperor to the golden bird, "and drive these horrid things away." But how could the golden thing sing, when there was no one to wind it? Then came through the window the beautiful song of the nightingale, who had come back to sing to the king. He sang till Death flew out of the window, and the king got up. When the courtiers came in to find him dead, he bade them "Good morning!"





The Bond of Friendship.

OUR home was in Greece. It was built of clay, but the door-posts were of polished marble. When the snow lay before the door, so that we could scarcely open it, my mother would draw me to her knee and sing the songs which our Turkish masters had forbidden to be sung. Days and nights passed while my father was away fighting the Turks. When he came home, I knew he would bring me shells from the Gulf of Lepanto, and perhaps a knife, keen and polished.

At last my father came, but this time he brought us a little girl wrapped in a sheepskin. He told us that the wicked Turks had killed her parents, and now she was to be my sister. Her name was Anastasia, and her father and mine were bound together by the Bond of Friendship, so he had brought her home to be my sister. Ah! what happiness was that! I carried her in my arms; I brought her flowers and wild bird's feathers; we drank together of the streams which flowed from Parnassus, and her head rested against mine under the laurel-grown roof while my mother sang our home songs.

One night armed men came to our hut, and took Anastasia, my mother and myself prisoners. They had already killed my father, whose body we saw as they hurried us along the path. We went a long way, and were kept in prison many days and nights, but at last we were set free, and we set out on our way to the sea. I carried Anastasia on my shoulders, and as my mother was ill and weak, it was a long journey. When we arrived it was the time of the Easter festival, and we went to the feast at the church. A dark-eyed boy threw his arms round my neck and kissed me, with the greeting: "Christ is risen!" And so it was that I first met Aphtanides.

My mother was clever at making nets for the fishermen, and, as they were in great request, we earned plenty of money, and stayed a long time by the sea—the beautiful sea that tastes like tears, like the tears which the stag wept, red, green, and pale blue.

Aphtanides could manage a boat well. I and Anastasia sailed with him many a time; the boat glided over the water as a cloud sails across the sky. When the sun went down, the hills were bathed in violet mist; they rose, one above another, and highest of all stood Parnassus, white with snow. In the sunlight the peak glowed like molten gold; the light seemed to come from itself; and long after the sun had set it gleamed through the blue, vaporous air. Sea-birds flapped the waves with their white wings; but for them, it would have been as silent as our rocky pass in Delphi.

Anastasia and I lay in the boat looking at the stars which shone above us clearer than the tapers in the church. They

were the same stars that shone over our little hut at Delphi. Sometimes it seemed to me that I was at home again. Suddenly



a splash was heard, the boat gave a lurch, and, with a shrill cry, I saw that Anastasia had fallen overboard. Quick as thought, Aphtanides sprang in after her and held her up to me; we wrung the water out of her clothes, and remained out in the sunlight till they were dry, for we did not wish any one else to know of the fright she had given us. From this time Aphtanides could claim a part in the life of our little foster-sister.

Finally we reached our old home. Anastasia became a beautiful woman, and I grew to be a man. Aphtanides visited us often. One day he proposed that we should take the Bond of Friendship, as my father and Anastasia's had done. So we put on our best clothes, and went to the church. Anastasia herself gave us the Bond of Friendship, and we promised to love each other always, and to tell all our troubles and our secrets to each other. When it was all over, I seized his hand and said:

"One thing you must now know, which until this has been a secret between myself and heaven. My whole soul is filled with love—a love stronger than that I bear to my mother, or to thee."

"And whom do you love?" asked Aphtanides; and his face grew red as fire.

"I love Anastasia," I replied—and his hand trembled in mine, and he became pale as a corpse. I saw it; I understood the cause. I bent toward him, and kissed his forehead.

"And she shall be thine!" he exclaimed, "thine! I may not deceive thee, nor will I do so. I also love her; but to-morrow I depart. In a year we shall see each other once more, and then you will be married, will you not? I have a little gold of my own; it shall be thine. Thou must, thou shalt take it." And we wandered home silently across the mountains.

In the morning Aphtanides was gone.





The Bachelor's Nightcap.

IN olden times, Hysken Street, in Copenhagen, was very narrow, and the shops where were sold saffron, ginger and pepper were very close together. The clerks were all old bachelors, and among them was old Anthony. He was thin and little and wrinkled. Instead of a hat, he wore a kind of a bonnet, and under the bonnet a nightcap, which was not very clean, for he wore it night and day.

At night, when old Anthony was through at the shop, and had mended his clothes and patched his boots, he would pull his nightcap down a little lower, go to bed and try to go to sleep. But this was not so easy a matter. Whether it was in the nightcap or not, the lower he pulled it over his eyes the more he would

think of the days which had long ago passed away, till the great tears would roll down over his cheeks. Then he would wipe away the tears with his nightcap, and think of the pepper and saffron and ginger; but when he put his nightcap on again, all the old visions would come back.

Although his eyes were closed he could see very plainly two children at play—a boy and a girl. The boy had rosy cheeks, golden ringlets, and clear, blue eyes; he was the son of Anthony, a rich merchant; it was himself. The little girl had brown eyes and black hair,

and was clever and courageous; she was the mayor's daughter, Molly. The children were playing with an apple; they shook the apple, and heard the pips rattling in it. Then they cut it in two, and each of them took half. They also divided the pips and ate all but one, which the little girl proposed should be placed in the ground. So it was planted and watched till it grew to a tree.

Molly grew too, till she was almost a woman, and all went well till she moved with her father to a distant town. Now years passed away, and young Anthony was quite sorrowful that he did not oftener hear from Molly. He had become a man, and he resolved to pay her a visit. On a stout horse he rode all day and all night till he came to the town where Molly





lived. They were very glad to see him, but Molly did not act as he thought she would. When he told her how unhappy he had been without her, and asked her to go back with him and be his own wife, she said that could not be thought of.

Anthony went home very angry, and declared that he would root up the apple tree and destroy everything that reminded him of Molly. But he didn't, for he was struck with a fever, and lay sick for many days; and then his father lost all his property, and Anthony had other things to think of. Now he knew it was for the best that Molly was not his wife. He had to work hard, just as though his father had never been rich. A merchant in Hysken Street offered to employ him as clerk, if he would never marry. Anthony laughed a bitter laugh and took the place.

One morning old Anthony did not appear, and when they went to his room they found him dead in his bed, with his old nightcap on. They put on a clean one when he was buried, and one of the other old clerks washed the old one and tried to wear it himself. But it was of no use;

as soon as he put it on, visions of bankruptcy, and disappointed love, and trials of dark days would appear, and he could not rest. It was laid away for half a century, and then fell into the mayor's hands. He too tried to sleep in it, but the old bachelor's thoughts and visions came to him just as though they were realities.

The moment he put the cap on, he dreamed of unfortunate love, of bankruptcy, and of dark days. "Hallo! how the nightcap burns!" he exclaimed, as he tore it from his head. Then a pearl rolled out, and then another and another, and they glittered and sounded as they fell. "What can this be? Is it paralysis, or something dazzling my eyes?" They were the tears which old Anthony had shed half a century before.

Many others tried to wear it, with the same result, till the old bachelor's story became as well known to half the town as it is to you now. The only thoughts and dreams of a bachelor's nightcap still remain. Never wish for such a nightcap. It would make your forehead hot, cause your pulse to beat with agitation, and conjure up all sorts of dreams.





The Old Street Lamp.

THIS was the last night of the old lamp in the street; to-morrow he was to go to the town hall to be inspected. He was getting very old. He might be fit for a factory or some street on the edge of the town; but the lamp was very much afraid he would be melted down. At all events he would be separated from the watchman and his wife, who took care of him, and that made him feel sad. He was hung up on the very night the watchman had begun his duties.

Ah, well, it was a very long time since one became a lamp and the other a watchman. His wife had a little pride in those days; she seldom condescended to glance at the lamp. But in later years, when the watchman, the wife, and the lamp had grown old, she had attended to it, cleaned it, and supplied it with oil.

This was the lamp's last night in the street, and to-morrow he must go to the town-hall—two very dark things to think

of. No wonder he did not burn brightly. Many other thoughts also passed through his mind. How many persons he had lighted on their way, and how much he had seen; as much, very likely, as the mayor and corporation themselves! "There was a handsome young man once," thought he; "it is certainly a long while ago, but I remember he had a little note, written on pink paper with a gold edge; the writing was elegant; twice he read it through,

and kissed it, and then looked up at me, with eyes that said quite plainly: 'I am the happiest of men!' Only he and I know what was written on this his first letter from his lady-love. Ah, yes, and there was another pair of eyes that I remember—it is really wonderful how the thoughts jump from one thing to another! A funeral passed through the street; a young and beautiful woman lay on a bier, decked with garlands of flowers, and attended by torches, which quite overpowered my light. All along the street stood the people from the houses, in crowds, ready to join the procession. But when the torches had passed from before me, and I could look round, I saw one person alone, standing, leaning against my post, and weeping. Never shall I forget the sorrowful eyes that looked up at me."

On the bridge over the canal stood three persons, who wished to recommend them-



naming his successor, they said they were very glad to hear it, for the lamp was too old and worn-out to make a proper choice.

The next day. Well, perhaps, we had better pass over the next day. The evening had come, and the lamp was resting—and guess where! Why, at the old watchman's house. He had begged, as a favor, that the mayor and corporation would allow him to keep the street-lamp, in consideration of his long and faithful service, as he had himself hung it up and lit it on the day he first commenced his duties, four-and-twenty years ago.

The old lamp was now very comfortable. He lacked only one thing for his complete happiness—that was a light. One day, the watchman's wife came to him and said: "We will have a grand illumination to-night, for 'tis my old man's birthday." Then the old lamp was very happy. He burned all the evening, and was much admired.

After that the old lamp had a dream. It appeared to him that the old people were dead, and that he had been taken to the iron foundry to be melted down. It caused him quite as much anxiety as on the day when he had been called upon to appear before the mayor and the council at the town-hall. But though he had the power of falling into decay from rust when he pleased, he did not use it. He was therefore melted, and changed into an elegant iron candlestick, one intended to hold a wax taper. The candlestick was like an angel holding a nosegay. It was for a green table, in a pleasant room; many books were about, and paintings on the walls. And the dream lasted all the old lamp's life.

selves to the lamp, for they thought he could give the office to whomsoever he chose. The first was a herring's head, which could emit light in the darkness. He remarked that it would be a great saving of oil if they placed him on the lamp-post. Number two was a piece of rotten wood, which also shines in the dark. He considered himself descended from an old stem, once the pride of the forest. The third was a glow-worm, and how he found his way there the lamp could not imagine, yet there he was, and could really give light as well as the others. But the rotten wood and the herring's head declared most solemnly, by all they held sacred, that the glow-worm only gave light at certain times, and must not be allowed to compete with themselves. The old lamp assured them that not one of them could give sufficient light to fill the position of a street lamp; but they would believe nothing he said. And when they discovered that he had not the power of



Grandmother.

GRANDMOTHER is very old, her face is wrinkled, and her hair is quite white; but her eyes are like two stars, and they have a mild, gentle expression in them when they look at you, which does you good. She wears a dress of heavy, rich silk, with large flowers worked on it; and it rustles when she moves. And then she can tell the most wonderful stories. Grandmother knows a great deal, for she was alive before father and mother—that's quite certain. She has a hymn-book, with large silver clasps, in which she often reads; and in the book, between the leaves, lies a rose, quite flat and dry; it is not so pretty as the roses which are standing in the glass, and yet she smiles at it most pleasantly, and tears even come into her eyes. "I wonder why grandmother looks at the withered flower in the old book in that way? Do you know?" Why, when grandmother's tears fall upon the rose, and she is looking at it, the rose revives, and fills

the room with its fragrance; the walls vanish as in a mist, and all around her is the glorious green wood, where in summer the sunlight streams through thick foliage; and grandmother, why she is young again, a charming maiden, fresh as a rose, with round, rosy cheeks, fair, bright ringlets, and a figure pretty and graceful; but the eyes, those mild, saintly eyes, are the same—they have been left to grandmother. At her side sits a young man, tall and strong; he gives her a rose and she smiles. Grandmother cannot smile like that now. Yes, she is smiling at the memory of that day, and many thoughts and recollections of the past; but the handsome young man is gone, and the rose has withered in the old book; and grandmother is sitting there, again an old woman, looking down at the withered rose in the book.

Grandmother is dead now. She had been sitting in her arm-chair, telling us a beautiful tale; and when it was finished, she said she was tired, and leaned her head back to sleep awhile. We could hear her gentle breathing as she slept; gradually it became quieter and calmer, and on her countenance beamed happiness and peace. It was as if lighted up with a ray of sunshine. She smiled once more, and then people said she was dead. She was laid in a black coffin, looking mild and beautiful in the white folds of the shrouded linen, though her eyes were closed; but every wrinkle had vanished, her hair looked white and silvery, and around her mouth lingered a sweet smile. The hymn-book, in which the rose still lay, was placed under her head, for so she had wished it; and then they buried grandmother.



Anne Lisbeth.

ANNE LISBETH was a beautiful young woman, with a red and white complexion, glittering white teeth, and clear soft eyes; and her footstep was light in the dance, but her mind was lighter still. She had a little child, not at all pretty; so he was put out to be nursed by a laborer's wife, and his mother went to the count's castle. She sat in splendid rooms, richly decorated with silk and velvet; not a breath of air was allowed to blow upon her, and no one was allowed to speak to her harshly, for she was nurse to the count's child. He was fair and delicate as a prince, and beautiful as an angel; and how she loved this child! Her own boy was provided for by being at the laborer's, where the mouth watered more frequently than the pot boiled, and where in general no one was at home to take care of the child. Then he would cry, but what nobody knows nobody cares for; so he would cry till he was tired, and then fall asleep; and while we are asleep we can feel neither hunger nor thirst. Ah, yes; sleep is a capital invention.

As years went on, Anne Lisbeth's boy

grew like a weed, and made himself useful to the laborer. She became quite a lady, and lived in the town, and seemed to have forgotten her homely boy altogether. When he was old enough he went to sea in a wretched boat, and he would sit at the helm while the skipper sat over the grog-can. There was only the skipper beside himself to manage the boat, and often he had a hard time of it.

One night, as the wind whistled through the rigging, and the boat went cutting through the sea, she struck a rock hidden beneath the surface, broke to pieces, and the skipper and Anne Lisbeth's boy were drowned, and their bodies were never seen.

Anne Lisbeth had now lived in the town many years. She was called Madame, and felt very dignified in consequence. The count's son, who was still beautiful, had grown to be nearly a man. One day Anne Lisbeth resolved to go and see him, as she



had not done so since she nursed him as a baby. It was a long distance to the count's house, and when she arrived there none of the servants knew her. The countess, however, treated her graciously, but the son whom she had loved and thought of



all these years did not deign to notice her; for how could he remember that she nursed him. Anne Lisbeth was greatly disappointed when she set out for home. It was a shorter way by the sea-shore, and she stopped to see the laborer's wife, where they had a cup of coffee together.

Now Anne Lisbeth had scarcely thought of the boy at all for years, but now, as she went along by the sea, she could not help thinking about him all the time. Night came on, and though there was a full moon, the mists made everything look strange and ghostly.

She continued her walk along by the margin of the sea. What was it she saw lying there? An old hat; a man's hat. Now, when might that have been washed overboard? She drew nearer, and stopped to look at the hat; "Ha! what was that lying yonder?" She shuddered; yet it was nothing save a heap of grass and tangled seaweed flung across a long stone, but it looked like a corpse. Only tangled grass, and yet she was frightened at it. As she turned to walk away, much came into her mind that she had heard in her childhood: old superstitions of spectres by the seashore; of the ghosts of drowned but unburied people, whose corpses had been washed up on the desolate beach.

She grew afraid and walked faster. Suddenly a white face appeared beside her and said: "Dig me a grave! dig me a grave!" She thought it was the spectre of her boy who was drowned in the sea. "Yes, yes!" she said, and she fell to digging in the sand. She must have it dug before daybreak, and she threw herself upon the ground and tore at the sand, so

that the blood ran from her fingers. But the day dawned, and the grave was only half dug, and Anne Lisbeth's senses left her.

It was bright day when two men found her on the seashore beside a large hole which she had dug in the sand. They took her home, and for many weeks she was in a raging fever. Then for a whole year she acted strangely. She talked constantly of her boy, and when they would let her go out she would go to the seashore and try to dig him a grave. One night she was gone all night, and could not be found. The next day, when the sexton went to ring the church bell, there she was beside the altar. She was very weak, but her cheeks were flushed and her eyes were bright. She told them that her boy had been with her, that she need not dig him a grave now, for she had buried him in her heart, which is the best place for a mother to hold her child. And when the sun set, Anne Lisbeth's troubles were at an end. She had gone to meet her boy.





The Fir Tree.

IN the forest, where the warm sun and the fresh air made a sweet resting place, grew a little fir tree. The soft air fluttered its leaves, the birds sang merrily all around, and sometimes the children would come and play beside it, but it was not happy; it wished so much to be tall like the pines. The little tree grew a notch taller every year, but as it grew it complained: "Oh, how I wish I was as tall as the other trees." Sometimes in winter, when the snow lay white on the ground, a hare would come springing along and jump right over the little tree, and then it would complain the more because it was small. Two winters passed, and the tree became so tall that the hare had to run around it, but still it complained.

In the autumn, the woodcutters came and cut down the tallest pines, lopped off their branches and took them away. The

storks told the little tree that they were to be masts for the ships. "Oh, that I could be a tall mast and go to sea," sighed the fir tree. Christmas grew near, and many of the small trees were cut down and taken away.

"Where are they going?" asked the fir tree.

"We know," sang the sparrows. "We have looked into the windows of the houses in the town, and seen them dressed up splendidly, and hanging full of cakes and toys and apples, and lighted with hundreds of wax tapers." And this made the fir tree more discontented than ever.

"Rejoice with us," said the air and the sunlight.

But the tree would not rejoice. It kept longing to go to sea, or to be dressed up and lit with tapers in a warm room. A short time before Christmas, the fir tree was cut down. As it fell it could not help feeling faint, and when it thought it was leaving its companions forever, it was quite sad. It was taken away and into a beautiful room. How the fir tree trembled! "What was going to happen to him now?" Some young ladies came, and the servants helped them to adorn





the tree. On one branch they hung little bags cut out of colored paper, and each bag was filled with sweetmeats; from other branches hung gilded apples and walnuts, as if they had grown there; and above, and all round, were hundreds of red, blue, and white tapers, which were fastened on the branches. Dolls, exactly like real babies, were placed under the green leaves—the tree had never seen such things before—and at the very top was fastened a glittering star, made of tinsel. Oh, it was very beautiful!

"This evening," they all exclaimed, "how bright it will be!" "Oh, that the evening were come," thought the tree, "and the tapers lighted! then I shall

know what else is going to happen. Will the trees of the forest come to see me? I wonder if the sparrows will peep in at the windows as they fly? shall I grow faster here, and keep on all these ornaments during summer and winter?" At last the tapers were lighted, and then what a glistening blaze of light the tree presented! And now the folding doors were thrown open, and a troop of children rushed in. They shouted for joy till the room rang, and they danced merrily round the tree, while one present after another was taken from it.

"What are they doing? What will happen next?" thought the fir. At last the candles burnt down to the branches and

were put out. Then the children received permission to plunder the tree.

Oh, how they rushed upon it, till the branches cracked, and had it not been fas-



tened with the glistening star to the ceiling, it must have been thrown down. The children then danced about with their pretty toys, and no one noticed the tree, except the children's maid, who came and peeped among the branches to see if an apple or a fig had been forgotten.

In the morning the servants and the housemaid came in. "Now," thought the fir, "all my splendor is going to begin again." But they dragged him out of the room and upstairs to the garret, and threw him on the floor, in a dark corner, where no daylight shone, and there they left him. "What does this mean?" thought the tree. "What am I to do here? I can hear nothing in a place like this," and he leant against the wall, and thought and thought. And he had time enough to think, for days

and nights passed and no one came near him, and when at last somebody did come, it was only to put away large boxes in a corner. So the tree was completely hidden from sight, as if it had never existed. "It is winter now," thought the tree; "the ground is hard and covered with snow, so that people cannot plant me. I shall be sheltered here, I dare say, until spring comes. How thoughtful and kind everybody is to me! Still I wish this place were not so dark, as well as lonely, with not even a little hare to look at. How pleasant it was out in the forest while the snow lay on the ground, when the hare would run by, yes, and jump over me, too, although I did not like it then. Oh! it is terribly lonely here."

One day the tree was dragged out of the garret and thrown in the yard. "Now," thought he, "I am to be planted again. I



hope they will think to take me back to the forest." But a boy soon came and cut him into little bits, and he was thrown on the fire to make the kettle boil.



Ole-Luk-Oie.

Nobody in the world knows so many stories as Ole-Luk-Oie, and nobody can tell them so nicely. When the children go to bed, he comes up the stairs very softly, and opens the doors without the slightest noise. Then he throws very fine dust in their eyes, just enough to prevent them from keeping them open. Ole-Luk-Oie will not hurt them at all, for he is very fond of children; he only wants them to be quiet, and that they never will be till they are asleep. Then Ole-Luk-Oie seats himself on the bed. Under each arm he carries an umbrella; one of them, with pictures on the inside, he spreads over the good children, and then they dream the most beautiful stories the whole night. But the other umbrella has no pictures, and this he holds over the naughty children, so that they sleep heavily, and wake in the morning without having dreamed at all.

Sometimes he will take them on horseback, and give them a ride through the air, through the town and across the ocean

to other lands. Sometimes he will take them in beautiful ships and show them strange sights. But he always brings them back again before morning, no matter how far they go. Now we shall hear how Ole-Luk-Oie came to a little boy named Hjalmar, and what he told him.

As soon as Hjalmar was well in bed, Ole-Luk-Oie touched, with his little magic wand, all the furniture in the room, which immediately began to chatter, and each article only talked of itself.

Over the chest of drawers hung a large picture in a gilt frame, representing a landscape, with fine old trees, flowers in the grass, and a broad stream, which flowed through the wood, past several castles, far out into the wild ocean. Ole-Luk-Oie touched the picture with his magic wand, and immediately the birds commenced singing, the branches of the trees rustled, and the clouds moved across the sky, casting their shadows on the landscape beneath them. Then Ole-Luk-Oie lifted little Hjalmar up to the frame, and placed his feet in the picture, just on the high grass, and there he stood with the sun shining down upon him through the branches of the trees. He ran to the water, and seated himself in a little boat which lay there. The sails glittered like silver, and six swans, each with a golden circlet round its neck, and a bright blue star on its forehead, drew the boat past the green wood, where the trees talked of robbers and witches, and the flowers of beautiful little elves and fairies, whose histories the butterflies had related to them. Brilliant fish, with scales like silver and gold, swam after the boat, while birds, red and blue, small



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and great, flew after him in two long lines. The gnats danced round them, and the cockchafers cried "Buz, buz." It was a most pleasant sail. Sometimes the forests were thick and dark, sometimes like a beautiful garden, gay with sunshine and flowers; then he passed great palaces of glass and of marble, and on the balconies stood princesses, whose faces were those of little girls whom Hjalmar had often played with.

The next night Ole-Luk-Oie came and



said: "What do you think I have got here? Do not be frightened, and you shall see a little mouse." And then he held out his hand to him, in which lay a lovely little creature. "It has come to invite you to a wedding. Two little mice are going to enter into the marriage state to-night. They reside under the floor of your mother's store-room, and that must be a fine dwelling-place."

"But how can I get through the little mouse-hole in the floor?" asked Hjalmar.

"Leave me to manage that," said Ole-Luk-Oie. And then he touched Hjalmar with his magic wand, whereupon he became less and less, until at last he was no longer than a little finger. "Now you can borrow the dress of the tin soldier. I think it will just fit you. It looks well to wear a uniform when you go in company."

"Yes, certainly," said Hjalmar; and in a moment he was dressed as neatly as the neatest of all tin soldiers.

"Will you be so good as to seat yourself in your mamma's thimble," said the little mouse, "that I may have the pleasure of drawing you to the wedding."

"Will you really take so much trouble, young lady?" said Hjalmar. And so in this way he rode to the mouse's wedding. First they went under the floor, and then passed through a long passage. Very soon they arrived at the bridal hall. On the right stood all the little lady mice, whispering and giggling, as if they were making game of each other. To the left were the gentlemen mice, stroking their whiskers with their forepaws; and in the centre of the hall could be seen the bridal pair standing side by side, in a hollow cheese-rind.

The room had been rubbed with bacon-rind, which was all the refreshment offered to the guests. But for dessert they produced a pea, on which a mouse belonging to the bridal pair had bitten the first letters of their names.

After this, Hjalmar returned home. He had certainly been in grand society; but he had been obliged to creep under a room, and to make himself small enough to wear the uniform of a tin soldier.



Under the Willow Tree.

IN the little town of Kjøge it is very bleak and cold, but in the outskirts, for a little while in the summer, the gardens are very pretty. Such, at least, was the opinion of Knud and Joanna, two little children whose parents were neighbors. They played together every day in the two gardens, and forced their way from one to the other through the gooseberry bushes which divided them. In one garden stood a willow tree and in the other an elder tree, under which the children would play, and they grew very fond of the trees. Joanna called the one, Mother Elder; and the other, Father Willow.

The town had a market place, and in fair time crowds of people would visit the booths and buy the pretty ribbons and toys and cakes. The best of it was that the man who kept the cake booth lodged at Knud's house, and he always had a nice cake for Knud and Joanna and would tell them stories by the hour. One evening he told them this story which they never forgot:

"Once upon a time there lay on my coun-

ter two ginger-bread cakes, one in the shape of a man, the other of a maiden. Their faces were on the side that was uppermost, for on the other side they looked very different. They were placed on the counter as samples, and after being there a long time they at last fell in love with each other; but neither of them spoke of it to the other, as they should have done if they expected anything to follow. 'He is a man, he ought to speak the first word,' thought the gingerbread maiden; but she felt quite happy. But his thoughts were far more ambitious. He dreamed that he was a real boy, that he possessed four real pennies, and that he had bought the gingerbread lady, and ate her up. And so they were on the counter for days and weeks, till they grew





hard and dry. 'Ah, well, it is enough for me that I have been able to live on the same counter with him,' said she one day; when suddenly 'crack,' and she broke in two. 'Ah,' said the gingerbread man to himself, 'if she had only known my love, she would have kept together a little longer.' And here they both are, and that is their history," said the cake man.

After this Knud was apprenticed to a shoemaker, and he grew to be a great boy. About Christmas there came a letter from Joanna's father saying that he was doing well, and Joanna was earning money by singing at a concert. Joanna herself had added, in her own hand, "Kind regards to Knud." This made Knud very happy, for his thoughts had been daily with Joanna, and now he knew that she also had thought of him; and the nearer the time came for his apprenticeship to end, the clearer did it appear to him that he loved Joanna, and that she must be his wife; and a smile came on his lips at the thought, and at one

time he drew the thread so fast as he worked, and pressed his foot so hard against the knee strap, that he ran the awl into his finger. But what did he care for that. He was determined not to play the dumb lover as the ginger-bread cakes had done.

At length he became a journeyman, and by great good luck found a master in Copenhagen, and, packing his knapsack, he journeyed to the great city. He lost no time in going to Joanna's house, which he easily found. He had to climb so many stairs that he became quite giddy, and wondered how so many people could live over one another. Joanna's new mother did not know him, but her father received him kindly and took him to her room.

How pretty everything was in that room! There were carpets and rugs, and



window curtains hanging to the ground. Pictures and flowers were scattered about. There was a velvet chair, and a looking-glass against the wall, into which a person might be in danger of stepping, for it was as large as a door. All this Knud saw at a glance, and yet, in truth, he saw nothing

but Joanna. She was quite grown up, and very different from what Knud had fancied her, and a great deal more beautiful. In all Kjöge there was not a girl like her; and how graceful she looked, although her glance at first was odd, and not familiar; but for a moment only, then she rushed towards him as if she would have kissed him; she did not, however, although she was very near it. She was really glad to see him, and she asked about the "elder mother and willow father," and talked about the two ginger-bread cakes, and the story of their silent love, and how they lay on the counter and split in two. She laughed quite heartily at the story, but Knud's cheeks burned and his heart beat quickly. He staid through the evening with them, and Joanna herself poured his cup of tea. Before he left them, Joanna gave him a ticket and invited him to come to the theatre where she sang.

At last the evening came when Knud was to go to the theatre. How beautifully Joanna sang; even the king smiled at her; and the people all clapped their hands. Knud shouted "Hurrah." When he went to visit her again, she told him she was going to France, and must bid him good-by. Knud's heart gave a great bound, and he thought, if he was not to be like the ginger-bread cakes, he must tell her now. So he told her how truly he loved her, and that she must be his wife. Joanna turned pale. She let his hand fall, and said that could never be. She would love him as a brother; she could never marry him. She was very kind and smoothed his heated forehead with her hand. Just then her mother came in, and Knud,

feeling that the world had all slipped from under him, hurried away.

Knud worked at his bench every day, but he was very sad. Finally, a longing came over him to travel out into the world. He packed his knapsack and started, and did not stop till he came to Nuremberg. Here he found a kind master, with whom he worked all winter. But there was an elder



tree growing by his windows, and when he smelled the blossoms he could stand it no longer. So he packed his knapsack again, and journeyed on over the mountains to Milan, where he found work.

One day his master took him to the opera, and, behold, when the curtain rose, there stood Joanna dressed in silk and gold. She sang, he thought, as only an angel could sing; and then she stepped forward to the

front and smiled, as only Joanna could smile, and looked directly at Knud. All the audience applauded her, and threw wreaths of flowers at her. In the street the people crowded round her carriage, and



drew it away themselves without the horses. Knud was in the foremost row, and shouted as joyously as the rest; and when the carriage stopped before a brilliantly lighted house, Knud placed himself close to the door of the carriage. It flew open and she stepped out; the light fell upon her dear face, and he could see that she smiled as she thanked them. Knud looked straight in her face, and she looked at him, but she did not recognize him. A man, with a glittering star on his breast, gave her his arm, and people said the two were engaged to be married.

Then Knud went home and packed up his knapsack; he felt he must return to the home of his childhood, to the elder tree and the willow. He traveled on over the mountains through the sleet and the snow. One evening he came to a willow tree which reminded him of home, and he sat down under it to rest. He was very tired; his head soon drooped and he fell

asleep. Then he dreamed that it was the old willow tree itself that came to meet him and carried him back to the little garden at home. Then two strange figures came to him, which he recognized at once as the two gingerbread cakes, only they had grown and were much changed. Behind them came Joanna, dressed in silk and gold, as he had last seen her. "We have made it all straight at last," said the gingerbread cakes, "and are going to be married, and you and Joanna are coming too." Then they walked away, hand-in-hand, through the streets of Kjøge. They turned their steps to the church, and Knud and Joanna followed them, also walking hand-in-hand. The great church door flew open wide, and as they walked up the broad aisle, soft tones of music sounded from the organ. "Our master first," said the gingerbread pair, making room for Knud and Joanna. As they knelt at the altar, Joanna bent her head over him, and cold, icy tears fell on his face.

In the night there was a fall of snow, which fell all over him, but he still slept on. The next morning the villagers found him frozen to death under the willow tree.





The Jumpers.

THE flea, the grasshopper, and the *hup-fauf*,* on one occasion wished to prove which could jump the highest. The matter became known, and everybody was attracted to the king's palace, where the performance was to take place.

"The jumper who springs the highest will belong to my daughter," said the king.

The flea appeared first and saluted every one present most politely.

Then came the grasshopper: he was uncommonly heavy looking; however, he had a very erect carriage and wore a green uniform.

Both the flea and the grasshopper made it known to every one who they were, and that they firmly believed they could, if they liked, marry the princess.

The *hupfauf* said nothing; it was, however, said of him that he thought the more. And, although he stood silent, doing nothing, the court-dog believed that the *hupfauf* could really speak.

"People can see by looking on his back," he said, "whether we shall have a mild or a severe winter, and no one can do that by looking at any man's back."

And now the jumpers are going to begin. The flea jumped so high that no one could see him, and then it was said that he had not jumped at all. The grasshopper sprung right into the king's face, and caused him to say: "How very disagreeable!"

The *hupfauf* stood a long time still as if in deep thought, and at last he sprung, and jumped right into the lap of the princess.

"Ah," said the king, "that is the best jump; he can go no higher than my daughter. He shall belong to the princess."

* A toy played with by Danish children. It is made from the breast-bone of a goose, and is by some wooden contrivance made to jump like a frog.



The Jewish Maiden.

IN a charity school, among the children, sat a little Jewish girl. The master was giving the scripture lesson, but she was not listening with the class. Her father had placed her there, on the condition that she should be excused from the scripture lesson; so she was allowed to study her geography. But she could not help listening to the scripture lesson, and its truths sank deep into her soul.

The master told her father that she was even more interested than the other children, and advised that he permit her to become a Christian. With tears in his eyes, the father said: "I don't know much about these things, but I promised her mother, on her dying bed, that I would not permit her child to be a Christian."

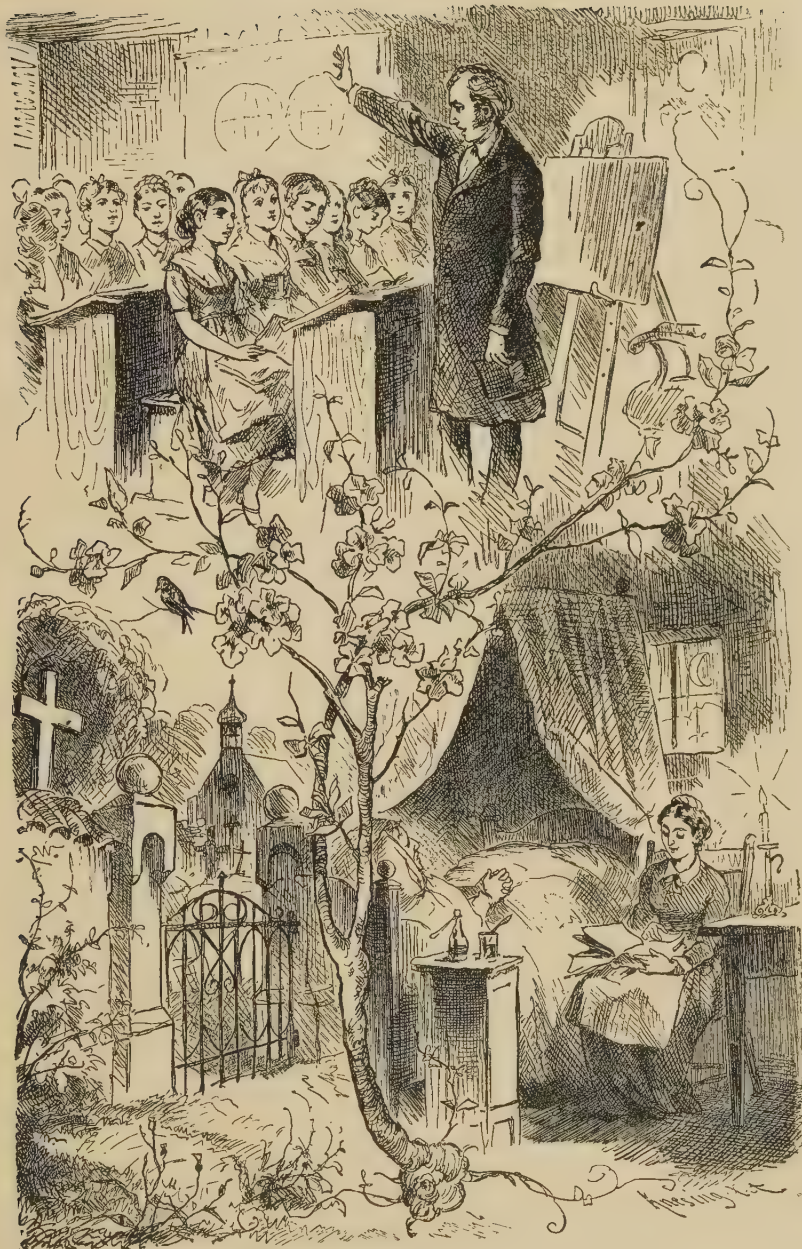
Years rolled by and the Jewish maiden went out to service. She heard the music in the Christian church, and she longed to go in, but she knew the promise her father had made. As she listened at the church door, the street boys made sport of her, but she did not mind that. She longed to read about Christ, but she dared

not. She remembered all she had heard about Him, and it made her sad to think that she could never be baptized.

Her master was reading aloud one evening. It was not from the Bible, but it was a story of a Christian who was taken prisoner by a Turk, and cruelly tortured until his friends secured his release by paying a large ransom. Not long after, in a war, the gentleman took the same Turk prisoner. The Turk expected no less than to be put to death, but the Christian said: "I will take the revenge that Christ teaches," and he treated the Turk kindly. Then the Jewish maiden longed all the more to be baptized.

She fretted so about it, that finally she was taken very sick, and she died. They would not bury her in the Christian churchyard, but just over the wall. And the sun which shines upon the graves of the Christians shines upon hers; and the church hymns sound across the church-yard, to her lonely resting-place. She who sleeps there may be counted as worthy at the resurrection as those who have been baptized. Christ said: "John baptized you with water, but I will baptize you with the Holy Ghost."







The Old Gravestone.

THE evenings were growing long, and the family were gathered about the table. Without, the autumn moon shone brightly. But they were not talking about the moon, but about a large flat stone that lay in the yard, not far from the kitchen door. The maids often laid the saucepans on it to dry in the sun, and the children were fond of playing on it.

"Yes," said the master of the house, "I believe the stone came from the graveyard of the old church which was pulled down. My father bought the stones; most of them were cut in two and used for paving-stones, but that one stone was preserved whole, and laid in the courtyard."

"Any one can see that it is a grave-

stone," said the eldest of the children; "the representation of an hour-glass and part of the figure of an angel can still be traced, but the inscription beneath is quite worn out, excepting the name 'Preben,' and a large 'S' close by it, and a little further down the name of 'Martha' can be easily read."

"Why that must be the grave-stone of Preben Schwane and his wife."

The old man who said this looked old enough to be the grandfather of all present in the room.

"Yes," he continued, "these people were among the last who were buried in the churchyard. They were a very worthy old couple. I can remember them well in the days of my boyhood. Every one knew them, and they were esteemed by all. They were the oldest residents in the town, and people said they possessed a ton of gold, yet they were always very plainly dressed. Preben and Martha were a fine old couple, and when they both sat on a bench, at the top of the steep stone steps, in front of their house, and nodded in a gentle, friendly way to passers by, it really made one feel quite happy. They were very good to the poor. The old woman died first. That day is still quite vividly before my eyes. I was a little boy, and had accompanied my father to the old man's house. Martha had fallen into the sleep of death just as we arrived there, and the old man was in great distress, and weeping like a child. He spoke of how lonely he should feel now she was gone, and how good and true she had been during the years that they had passed through life together, and how they had become acquainted, and learnt to love each

other. I was, as I have said, a boy, and only stood by and listened to what the others said; but it filled me with a strange emotion to listen to the old man, and to watch how the color rose in his cheeks as he spoke of the days of their courtship, of how beautiful she was. And then he talked of his wedding-day; and his eyes brightened, and he seemed to be carried

The old house, with its balcony, and the bench at the top of the high steps, under the lime-tree, was considered, by the road-inspectors, too old and rotten to be left standing. Afterwards, when the same fate befel the convent church, and the graveyard was destroyed, the grave-stone of Preben and Martha, like everything else, was sold to whoever would buy it. And



back, by his words, to that joyful time. And yet there she was, lying in the next room, dead—an old woman, and he was an old man, speaking of the days of hope, long passed away. Ah, well, so it is; then I was but a child, and now I am old, as old as Preben Schwane then was.

A year later Old Preben was laid beside his wife.

so it happened that this stone was not cut in two as many others had been, but now lies in the courtyard below, a scouring block for the maids, and a playground for the children. The paved street now passes over the resting-place of Old Preben and his wife; no one thinks of them any more now."

And the old man shook his head mourn-

fully, and said: "Forgotten! Ah, yes, everything will be forgotten!" And then the conversation turned on other matters.

But the youngest child in the room, a boy, with large, earnest eyes, mounted upon a chair behind the window curtains, and looked out into the yard, where the moon was pouring a flood of light on the old grave-stone—the stone that had always appeared to him so dull and flat, but which lay there now like a green leaf out of a book of history. All that the boy had heard of Old Preben and his wife seemed clearly defined on the stone, and as he gazed on it, and glanced at the clear, bright moon shining in the pure air, it was as if the light of God's countenance beamed over His beautiful world.

"Forgotten! Everything will be forgotten!" still echoed through the room, and in the same moment an invisible spirit whispered to the heart of the boy: "Preserve carefully the seed that has been entrusted to thee, that it may grow and thrive. Guard it well. Through thee, my child, shall the obliterated inscription on the old, weather-beaten grave-stone, go forth to future generations in clear golden characters. The old pair shall again wander through the streets arm-in-arm, or sit with their fresh, healthy cheeks, on the bench under the lime-tree, and smile and nod at rich and poor. The seed of this hour may ripen into a poem. The beautiful and the good are never forgotten; they live always in story or in song."





The Swineherd.

THERE WAS ONCE a young prince who had a small kingdom, and a very little money. Yet he was bold enough to want to marry the emperor's daughter. In the prince's garden grew a rose tree of a most unusual kind, which bore flowers but once in five years; and then only one rose. But the fragrance of this one rose was so sweet that people who inhaled it forgot for the time all their cares and sorrows. Besides this rose-tree the prince had a nightingale that sang so sweetly, it seemed as if all the loveliest melodies were seated in its throat. The flower-tree and the bird were both packed carefully in large silver vases, and forwarded to the princess, who, when she saw them, clapped her hands with joy, exclaiming: "Oh, suppose there should be a little pussy-cat for me!"

When she saw the rose-tree, she turned away, and said: "It is only a natural rose-tree;" and when the bird was taken out in his cage, she was displeased, because it was only a natural bird. When the prince found that his presents were not accepted, he stained his face brown, and his hair black, put on some old clothes, pulled his

hat down low, and went to the emperor's palace, and engaged to be swineherd to the emperor. He lived in a little room close to the pig-sties, and watched the pigs all day.

But while he was watching the pigs, he made a pretty little kettle, hung about with bells. And when the kettle boiled, the bells would play a tune. But this was not all; whoever put his finger in the steam, could tell just what everybody was having for breakfast. It was a wonderful kettle.

When the princess went to walk with her maids, she heard the kettle playing, and she wanted to buy it. The disguised prince said she might have it for ten kisses.

The princess was offended at the presumption of the swineherd, and she turned



to walk away. But the kettle began to sing again, and she turned back, and bought it, giving the swineherd ten kisses, with the maids all standing around, so that no one should see. They took the kettle away, and found much pleasure in hearing it sing, and finding out what their neighbors were cooking for breakfast.

The swineherd then made a wonderful musical rattle, that played all the tunes that ever were made. When the princess heard it, she wanted the rattle also, but the swineherd would not give it to her for less than a hundred kisses. "I must have the rattle," said the princess. "Take your places and form a ring round me." So the

ladies quickly formed a circle round the princess, and spread out their dresses to hide her.

"What can all that commotion be about, near the pigsties?" asked the emperor, as he came out on the high balcony. Then he rubbed his eyes and put on his spectacles. "It looks as if the ladies of the court were having some foolish frolic; I must go nearer and see what it means." So he pulled up his slippers and walked slowly and cautiously through the garden, but the ladies were so busy counting the kisses, that they did not notice the emperor's approach, till he came so close that he stood on tiptoe to see what was going on.

"What is all this?" he asked, and the next moment, when he saw the kissing going on, he drew off his slipper and threw it at the head of the swineherd. "Pack yourselves off quickly, bag and baggage," he thundered.

"Oh, wretched creature that I am," sighed the princess; "if I had only accepted the offer of that handsome prince!"

Then the swineherd stepped behind a tree, put on his princely dress, and came out looking so handsome that the princess curtsied to him, and said at once she would marry him. But the prince turned his back on her, saying: "You refused the offer of an honorable prince, and for trifling toys have permitted yourself to be kissed by a swineherd."







The Goblin and the Huckster.

THERE was once a student, who lived in a garret. And there was also a huckster, to whom the house belonged, and who occupied the ground floor. A goblin lived with the huckster, because at Christmas he always had a large dish full of jam.

One evening the student came into the shop to buy candles and cheese for himself; he obtained what he wished, and then the huckster and his wife nodded good evening to him. The student nodded in return, as he turned to leave, then suddenly stopped, and began reading the piece of paper in which the cheese was wrapped. It was a leaf torn out of an old book—a book that ought not to have been torn up, for it was full of poetry.

“Yonder lies some more of the same sort,” said the huckster; “you shall have the rest for sixpence, if you will.”

“Indeed I will,” said the student; “give me the book instead of the cheese. It would be a sin to tear up a book like this. You are a clever man, and a practical man;

but you understand no more about poetry than that cask yonder.”

But the goblin felt very angry that any man should say such things to a huckster who was a householder and sold the best butter. As soon as it was night, the goblin stepped softly into the bedroom where the huckster's wife slept, and took away her tongue. Whatever object in the room he placed the tongue upon immediately received voice and speech. The goblin laid the tongue upon the cask, in which lay a quantity of old newspapers.

“Is it really true,” he asked, “that you do not know what poetry is?”

“Of course, I know,” replied the cask; “poetry is something that always stands in the corner of a newspaper, and is sometimes cut out; and I may venture to affirm



that I have more of it in me than the student has.”

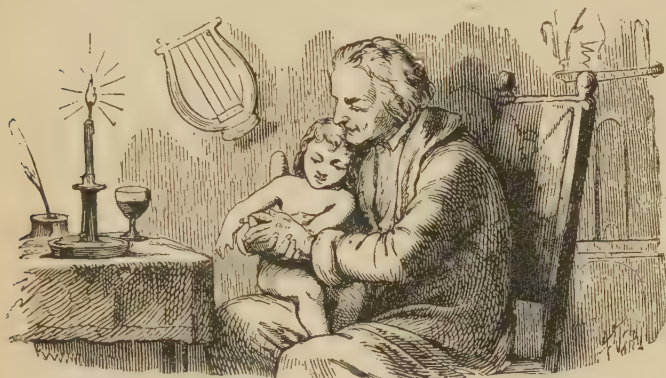
“Now I shall go and tell the student,” said the goblin; and with these words he went quietly up the back stairs to the garret where the student lived. He had a

candle burning still, and the goblin peeped through the keyhole and saw that he was reading in the torn book. But how light the room was! From the book shot forth a ray of light which grew broad and full, like the stem of a tree, from which bright rays spread upward and over the student's head. Each leaf was fresh, and each flower was like a beautiful female head; some with dark and sparkling eyes, and others with eyes that were wonderfully blue and clear. The fruit gleamed like stars, and the room was filled with sounds of beautiful music. The little goblin had never imagined any sight so glorious as this. He stood still on tiptoe, peeping in, till the light went out in the garret. The student no doubt had blown out his candle and gone to bed; but the little goblin remained

standing there nevertheless, and listening to the music which still sounded on, soft and beautiful, a sweet cradle-song for the student, who had lain down to rest.

"This is a wonderful place," said the goblin; "I never expected such a thing. I should like to stay here with the student;" and then the little man thought it over, for he was a sensible little sprite. At last he sighed: "But the student has no jam!" So he went downstairs again into the huckster's shop, and it was a good thing he got back when he did, for the cask had almost worn out the lady's tongue; he had given a description of all that he contained on one side, when the goblin entered and restored the tongue to the lady. But from that time forward the whole shop formed their opinions from that of the cask.





The Mischievous Boy.

As a kind old poet was seated in his room one evening, an awful storm arose. The wind blew and the rain fell in torrents. All at once the old poet heard a childish voice say: "Oh, please let me in; I am so cold and wet." The poet opened the door, and there stood a little boy nearly naked. He had fair hair, and his two eyes sparkled like stars. Indeed, he looked like a little angel, but he was shivering with the cold. The old poet let him in, squeezed the rain from his curly hair, and held him on his knees, by the fire.

After taking a little sweet mulled wine, and eating a roasted apple, the boy seemed revived, and his cheeks became quite rosy. But presently he surprised the good poet by slipping from his arms, and then dancing and skipping wildly about the room.

"You are a merry rogue," said the poet. "What is your name?"

"I am called Love," he replied; "don't you know me? There lies my bow, and I know how to shoot it, too!"

"But the bow is spoilt," said the poet.

"That would be a pity," he said, as he took up the bow and examined it care-

fully. "Ha!" he exclaimed; "it is quite dry now; the string stretches properly. There has no harm happened to it. I will prove this," he added, as he took an arrow from his quiver, laid it across the bow, drew the string, and shot the good old poet in the heart!

"Now, is my bow useless?" cried the boy, as he ran away quickly.

The wicked boy! How could he dare to shoot the good old poet, who had sheltered him in his warm room, and had been so kind to him.

There lay the poet on the ground, and wept; he had really been struck to the heart, and he could only say: "Alas! what a mischievous youngster this 'Love' is! I



shall tell all the children, both boys and girls, never to associate with him, for he is sure to play them some trick."

So all the good children who have been warned, take care to have nothing to do with such a bad boy. But Love cheats them, for he is so sly and cunning.

As the students at the college pass by, he steps forward with a book under his arm, and looking so grave and respectable in his black clothes, that they have not the least idea who he is.

In fact, they take him for a fellow-student, and are soon seen walking with him, arm in arm. However, he contrives to shoot an arrow into their hearts when they least expect it.

And it is the same with the young ladies, when they are coming from the

lectures, or from confirmation, or even from church.

Indeed, he is everywhere. At the theatre he sits in the great lustre-light and burns like a bright flame, so that people mistake him for a lamp.

He frequents the royal gardens and the public promenades. And, only fancy! once he positively shot his arrow into the hearts of our fathers and mothers. Just ask them.

Just think, now, that once he even fired an arrow at our old grandmother; but it is a long time ago. The wound is quite healed, yet she will never forget it. Fie upon this wicked Love! However, we know now what a mischievous youngster he is, and if we do not avoid him, we know what is likely to happen.





Little Ida's Flowers.

"My poor flowers are quite dead," said little Ida; "they were so pretty yesterday evening, and now all the leaves are hanging down quite withered. What do they do that for?" she asked, of the student who sat on the sofa.

"Don't you know what is the matter with them?" said the student. "The flowers were at a ball last night, and therefore it is no wonder they hang their heads."

"But flowers cannot dance?" cried little Ida.

"Yes, indeed, they can," replied the student. "When everybody is asleep, they jump about quite merrily. They have a ball almost every night."

"Can children go to these balls?"

"Yes," said the student.

"Where do the beautiful flowers dance?"

"Have you not often seen the large castle outside the gates of the town, where the king lives in summer, and where the beautiful garden is full of flowers? Well, the flowers have capital balls there."

"I was in the garden out there yesterday with my mother," said Ida, "but all the leaves were off the trees, and there

was not a single flower left. Where are they? I used to see so many."

"They are in the castle," replied the student. "You must know that as soon as the king and all the court are gone into the town, the flowers run out of the garden into the castle, and you should see how merry they are. The two most beautiful roses seat themselves on the throne, and are called the king and queen. Then all the red cockscombs range themselves on each side, and bow; these are the lords-in-waiting. After that, the pretty flowers come in and there is a grand ball."

"Oh, how funny!" said Ida, and she laughed.

"How can any one put such notions into a child's head?" said a tiresome lawyer, who had come to pay a visit, and sat on the sofa. He did not like the student, and would grumble when he saw him cutting out droll or amusing pictures. Sometimes it would be a man hanging on a gibbet and holding a heart in his hand, as if he had been stealing hearts. Sometimes it was an old witch riding through the air on a broom and carrying her husband on her nose. But the lawyer did not like such jokes, and he would say as he had just said: "How can any one put such nonsense into a child's head? What absurd fancies there are!"

But to little Ida, all these stories which the student told her about the flowers, seemed very droll, and she thought over them a great deal. The flowers did hang their heads, because they had been dancing all night, and were very tired, and most likely they were ill. Her doll, Sophy, lay in the doll's bed asleep, and little Ida said



to her: "You must really get up, Sophy, and be content to lie in the drawer to-night; the poor flowers are ill, and they must lie in your bed."

Then little Ida went to bed, and lay thinking about the flowers and their balls. After a while she heard soft music. She crept out of her bed, went to the door, and looked into the room. Oh, what a splendid

summer, for she remembered the student saying she was very much like Miss Lina, one of Ida's friends. Then she saw a large purple crocus go up to the doll's bedstead and draw back the curtains; there lay the sick flowers, but they got up directly, and nodded to the others as a sign that they wished to dance. They did not look at all ill now, but jumped about and were very merry.



sight there was to be sure! All the hyacinths and tulips stood in two long rows down the room, not a single flower remained in the window, and the flower-pots were all empty. The flowers were dancing gracefully on the floor, making turns and holding each other by their long green leaves. At the piano sat a large yellow lily which little Ida was sure she had seen in the

When they stopped dancing, Ida went back to bed. In the morning, she ran to look at her flowers and they were quite dead. She could not help thinking that they had danced too much while they were sick. She put them in a neat box, and her cousins dug a grave in the garden and there she sorrowfully buried them.



The Buckwheat.

VERY often, after a violent thunder-storm, a field of buckwheat appears blackened and singed, as if a flame of fire had passed over it. The country people say that this appearance is caused by lightning; but I will tell you what the sparrow says, and the sparrow heard it from an old willow-tree which grew near a field of buckwheat, and is there still. It is a large venerable tree, though a little crippled by age. The trunk has been split, and out of the crevice grass and brambles grow. The tree bends forward slightly, and the branches hang quite down to the ground just like the green hair. Corn grows in all the surrounding fields, not only rye and barley, but oats—pretty oats that, when ripe, look like a number of little golden canary-birds sitting on a bough. The corn has a smiling look, and the heaviest and richest ears bend their heads low as if in

pious humility. Once there was also a field of buckwheat, and this was exactly opposite to the old willow-tree. The buckwheat did not bend like the other grain, but erected its head proudly and stiffly on the stem. "I am as valuable as any other corn," said he, "and I am much handsomer; my flowers are as beautiful as the bloom of the apple blossom, and it is a pleasure to look at us. Do you know of anything prettier than we are, you old willow-tree?"

And the willow-tree nodded his head, as if he would say: "Indeed I do."

But the buckwheat spread itself out with pride, and said: "Stupid tree; he is so old that grass grows out of his body."

There arose a very terrible storm. All the field-flowers folded their leaves together, or bowed their little heads, while the storm passed over them, but the buck-

wheat stood erect in its pride. "Bend your head as we do," said the flowers.

"I have no occasion to do so," replied the buckwheat.

"Bend your head as we do," cried the ears of corn; "the angel of the storm is



coming; his wings spread from the sky above to the earth beneath. He will strike you down before you can cry for mercy."

"But I will not bend my head," said the buckwheat.

"Close your flowers and bend your leaves," said the old willow-tree. "Do not look at the lightning when the cloud bursts; even men cannot do that. In a flash of lightning, heaven opens, and we can look in; but the sight will strike even human beings blind. What then must happen to us, who only grow out of the earth, and are so inferior to them, if we venture to do so?"

"Inferior, indeed!" said the buckwheat. "Now I intend to have a peep into

heaven." Proudly and boldly he looked up, while the lightning flashed across the sky as if the whole world were in flames.

When the dreadful storm had passed, the flowers and the corn raised their drooping heads in the pure still air, refreshed by the rain, but the buckwheat lay like a weed in the field, burnt to blackness by the lightning. The branches of the old willow-tree rustled in the wind, and large water-drops fell from his green leaves as if the old willow were weeping. Then the sparrows asked why he was weeping, when all around seemed so cheerful. "See," they said, "how the sun shines, and the clouds float in the blue sky. Do you not smell the sweet perfume from flower and bush? Wherefore do you weep, old willow-tree?" Then the willow told them of the haughty pride of the buckwheat, who would insist on having a peep into heaven, when the



lightning split the clouds, in spite of all advice, and of the punishment which followed in consequence.

This is the story told me by the sparrows one evening when I begged them to relate some tale to me.



Elder-Tree Mother.

THERE was once a little boy who had taken cold by going out and getting his feet wet. No one could think how he had managed to do so, for the weather was quite dry. His mother undressed him and put him to bed, and then she brought in the teapot to make him a good cup of elder-tea, which is so warming. At the same time, the friendly old man, who lived all alone at the top of the house, came in at the door. He had neither wife nor child, but he was very fond of children, and knew so many fairy tales and stories that it was a pleasure to hear him talk. "Now, if you drink your tea," said the mother, "very likely you will have a story in the meantime."

"Yes, if I could think of a new one," said the old man. "But how did the little fellow get his feet wet?"

"Ah! that is what we cannot find out."

"Well, I will tell you a story," said the old man, "if you will tell me how deep the water is in the street gutter."

"Just half way up to my knees," said the boy.

"It is easy to see how we got our feet wet," said the old man. "But now for the story. Stop, there is a story in the tea-pot now."

The little boy looked at the tea-pot, and saw the lid raise, and long branches sprouted out, until they grew into a large elder-tree covered with flowers; and oh, how fragrant the blossoms smelt. In the midst of the tree sat a little old woman, who came and took the little boy out of bed and laid him on her bosom. The branches closed over them till they sat in a leafy bower, and the bower flew away with them through the air.

Then the elder-mother all at once changed to a beautiful young maiden.

Her large blue eyes were very beautiful to look at. She was the same age as the boy; and they kissed each other, and felt very happy. They left the arbor together, hand in hand, and found themselves in a beautiful flower-garden, which belonged to their home. On the green lawn was their father's stick. There was life in this stick for the little ones; for no sooner did they place themselves upon it than the white knob changed into a pretty neighing head, with a black flowing mane, and four long slim legs sprung forth. "Hurrah! now we will ride many miles away," said the boy. The little maiden, who, we know, was Elder-tree mother, kept crying out: "Now we are in the country. Do you see the farmhouse, with a great baking-oven, which sticks out from the wall by the roadside, like a gigantic egg? There is an elder spreading its branches over it, and a cock is marching about, and scratching for the chickens. See how he struts! Now we

are near the church. There it stands upon the hill, shaded by the great oak trees, one of which is half dead. See, here we are at the blacksmith's forge. How the fire burns! And the men are striking the hot iron with the hammer, so that the sparks fly about



Now then, away to the nobleman's beautiful estate." And the boy saw all that the little girl spoke of as she sat behind him on the stick.

They rode all over the whole country—sometimes it was spring, then summer; then autumn and winter followed.

"It is beautiful here in summer," said Elder-tree mother, and then the corn waved like the sea. Red and yellow flowers grew among the hedges. In the evening the moon rose round and full, and the hay stacks in the meadows filled the air with their sweet scent. These were scenes never to be forgotten. "It is lovely here also in autumn," said the little maiden; and then the scene changed. The sky appeared

higher and more beautifully blue, while the forest glowed with colors of red, green, and gold. The hounds were off to the chase; large flocks of wild birds flew screaming over the Huns' graves, where the blackberry bushes twined round the old ruins. "Again," said the maiden, "it is beautiful here in winter." Then in a moment all the trees were covered with hoar-frost, so that they looked like white coral. The snow crackled beneath the feet as if every one had on new boots. In warm rooms there could be seen the Christmas trees decked out with presents, and lighted up amid festivities and joy. In the country farm-houses could be heard the sound of the violin, and there were games for apples, so that even the poorest child could say: "It is beautiful in winter." And beautiful indeed were all the scenes which the maiden showed to the little boy, and always around them floated the fragrance of the elder-blossom. Then all at once, the little boy lay in his bed again. He did not know whether he had been dreaming or not. The teapot stood on the table, but no elder-tree grew out of it, and the old man was just going out of the door.

"Mother," cried the boy, "I have been to warm countries."

"I can quite believe it," said she. "When any one drinks two cups of elder-flower tea, he may well get into warm countries;" and then she covered him up that he might not take cold.

"And where is the Elder-tree mother?" asked the boy.

"She is in the tea-pot," said the mother, "and there she may stay, for that is the best place for her."





The Old House.

In a city street stood a very old house. Verses were written over the windows in old-fashioned letters, and curiously carved faces grinned from under the cornices. At the end of the leaden gutter was a dragon's head. It was intended that the water should come out of the dragon's mouth, but it poured out of a hole in the side. The other houses in the street were quite new. Perhaps they thought: "How long will that heap of rubbish remain here to obstruct our view and disgrace us?"

At the window of one of the new houses opposite, sat a little boy with rosy cheeks. Whatever the other houses thought, the little boy was very fond of this old house and he would sit and look at it for hours. Certainly it was a very good house to look

at for amusement. An old man lived in it who wore knee breeches and a wig, and brass buttons on his coat. He would sometimes come to the window and then the boy would nod at him and he would nod back again, so they became good friends, though they had never spoken to each other. Every morning another old man would come to wait on him, but otherwise he was quite alone.

One day the little boy heard his parents say that the old man was well-off, but he was quite lonely. The next Sunday morning he wrapped one of his tin soldiers in a piece of paper, and took it across the street and gave it to the old serving-man who came to the door. "Please give this to the gentleman who lives here," he said. "He must be lonely, and a tin soldier is good to play with." The old man was evidently pleased, for the next day he sent his attendant over to ask that the little boy might visit him. When he went up to the door, the carved trumpeters seemed as if they were trying to blow harder than ever.

When the door opened and he went in, he found the great hall hung with pictures of knights in armor and ladies in silk gowns, and they all seemed to be glad to see him. The old high-backed chairs said: "Creak, creak," and invited him to sit down, but he went in to the room where the old man was.

"Thank you for the tin soldier," said the old man.

"They say at home that you are very lonely," said the boy.

"Oh," replied the old man, "I have pleasant thoughts of the past for my company."



On the wall hung the picture of a beautiful young lady, dressed in the fashion of the olden times, with powdered hair, and a full stiff skirt.

"Where did you get that picture?" asked the boy. "From the shop up the street," answered the old man. "Many old portraits hang there, that nobody seems to care about, because the people have been dead and buried long since. But I knew this lady many years ago. She too has been dead nearly half a century."

Then the old man showed the boy a book full of queer pictures of long processions of people such as are never seen now, all carrying banners. The tailors had a flag with a pair of scissors supported by two lions, and on the shoemakers' flag there were not boots, but an eagle with two heads, for the shoemakers must have everything arranged so that they can say: "This is a pair." What a picture-book it was; and then the old man went into another room and brought apples and nuts. It was very pleasant, certainly, to be in that old house.

How happy and delighted the little boy was; and after he returned home, and while days and weeks passed, a great deal of nodding took place from one house to the other, and then the little boy went to pay another visit. The carved trumpeters blew "Tanta-ra-ra. There is the little boy. Tanta-ra-ra." The swords and armor on the old knights' pictures rattled. The silk dresses rustled, and the old chairs cried: "Creak." It was all exactly like the first time. "I cannot bear it any longer," said the tin soldier; "I have wept tears of tin, it is so melancholy here. Let me go to the wars, and lose an arm or a leg, that would be some change; I cannot bear it."

"You are given away," said the little boy; "you must stay. Don't you see that?" Then the old man came in, with a box containing many curious things to show him. The piano was opened, and the old man played, but the piano sounded quite out of tune. Then he looked at the picture he had bought at the broker's, and



his eyes sparkled brightly as he nodded at it, and said: "Ah, she could sing that tune."

"I will go to the wars! I will go to the wars!" cried the tin soldier as loud as he could, and threw himself down on the floor. Where could he have fallen? The old man searched, and the little boy searched, but he was gone, and could not

there was an auction at the old house, and from his window the little boy saw the people carrying away the pictures of old knights and ladies, the old chairs, and the cupboards. *Her* portrait, which had been bought at the picture-dealer's, went back again to his shop.

In the spring the old house was torn down and a new one built in its place.



be found. The boards of the floor were open and the tin soldier had fallen through a crack. The day went by, and the little boy returned home; the week passed, and many more weeks. It was winter, and the windows were quite frozen, so the little boy was obliged to breathe on the panes, and rub a hole to peep through at the old house. But nobody was at home, for the old man was dead. A few days after,

The boy grew to be a man, married and went to live in the new house. One day he was walking with his wife in the garden, and his wife, in planting a flower, pricked her finger with something hidden in the earth. When they dug it out it was the tin soldier. It was covered with rust, and was not attractive, but when he told his wife how it came there, she placed it on the mantel-piece with the other ornaments.



The Last Pearl.

IN a rich, happy house, a son and heir had just been born, and all the family were full of joy. The guardian angel of the house leaned against the head of the bed and spread over it a canopy filled with stars, and each star was a pearl of happiness. "Everything is here," said the guardian angel; "here sparkle health, wealth, fortune and love—all that can be wished for."

"No, not everything," said a voice—the voice of the good angel of the child; "one fairy has not yet brought her gift but she will come some time. It is the last pearl that is wanting."

"We will seek the fairy and get it," said the angel of the house, "that the gifts may be complete."

"Then I will take you to the fairy," said the good angel of the child. The fairy has no abiding place. She rules in the palace of the emperor, she visits the peasant's cot. She goes to all houses and all hearts. Let us find her and get this pearl—the only gem lacking in all this wealth."

Then hand-in-hand they floated away to the spot where the fairy was now lingering. It was a large house with dark windows and empty rooms, in which a peculiar stillness reigned. A whole row of windows stood open, so that the rude wind could enter at its pleasure, and the long white curtains waved to and fro in the current of air. In the centre of one of the rooms stood an open coffin, in which lay the body of a young woman, still in the bloom of youth, and very beautiful. Fresh roses were scattered over her. The delicate folded hands and the noble face, glorified in death by the solemn, earnest look, which spoke of an entrance into a better world, were alone visible. Around the coffin stood husband and children, the youngest in the father's arms. They were come to take a last farewell look of their mother. The husband kissed her hand, which now lay like a withered leaf, but which a short time before had been diligently employed in deeds of love for them all. Tears of sorrow rolled down their cheeks, and fell in heavy drops on the floor, but not a word was spoken. With silent steps, still sobbing, they left the room. Strange men came in and placed the lid of the coffin over the dead, and drove the nails firmly in; while the blows of the hammer echoed in the hearts that were bleeding.

"Whither art thou leading me?" asked the guardian angel. "Here dwells no fairy whose pearl could be counted amongst the best gifts of life."

"Yes, she is here," replied the angel, pointing to a corner of the room; and there—where in her life-time, the mother had taken her seat amidst flowers and

pictures; in that spot, where she, like the blessed fairy of the house, had welcomed husband, children, and friends, and, like a



sunbeam, had spread joy and cheerfulness around her, the centre and heart of them all—there, in that very spot, sat a strange woman, clothed in long, flowing garments, and occupying the place of the dead wife and mother. It was the fairy, and her name was “Sorrow.” A hot tear rolled into her lap, and formed itself into a pearl, glowing with all the colors of the rainbow. The angel seized it: the pearl glittered like a star with seven-fold radiance. The pearl of Sorrow, which must not be wanting, increases the lustre, and explains the meaning of all the other pearls.

The Ice Maiden.

LITTLE RUDY lived in a pretty valley of the Alps. It is on these mountains that the Ice Maiden lives, she of whom the old people talk in whispers, for she does not like men, and she lies in wait for them in the clefts and on the high peaks. She builds for herself great palaces that glisten in the sun, and sometimes show all the colors of the rainbow. She piles the snow

high in the passes and sometimes sends it sliding down the sides of the mountain. Then the people turn white with fear, and say the avalanche is coming.

But Rudy was not afraid of the Ice Maiden. He clambered about the mountain peaks like the chamois, who were more afraid of him than of the older hunters for he was a good shot, and he could climb nearer to them when they thought themselves in safe places.

When Rudy was a very little boy, his mother started with him in her arms to visit his grandfather over the mountain. It had been snowing for several days and now the snow lay deep on the ledges. In crossing one of these the snow gave way and she and Rudy fell into a cleft. When they were taken out Rudy was alive, but his mother was dead.

As Rudy grew older, all the maidens were in love with him, but he had eyes only for one—the miller’s daughter, Babette. So bold and handsome a lad was not to be refused, so when he asked her to marry him, she blushed and consented. They went to Villeneuve to be married, and while Babette’s father took his after-dinner nap, they rowed on the lake to a little island. As they sat on the shore, a sudden storm of wind arose and the boat broke her mooring and was fast drifting. Rudy was a good swimmer, and he jumped into the lake and swam for the boat. The Ice Maiden kissed him as he swam, and he grew stiff with cold and sank. As Babette watched for him on the shore, the lightning flashed, and she saw his body, and the Ice Maiden stood with one foot pressing him down, and so they floated out of her sight.





The Darning Needle.

THERE was once a darning needle who thought herself so fine as to be fit for embroidery. "Hold me tight," she would say to the fingers, when they took her up, "don't let me fall; if you do I shall break." The fingers one day placed the point of the needle against the cook's slipper; there was a crack in the upper leather, which had to be sewn together.

"What coarse work," said the darning needle. "I shall never get through. I shall break!—I am breacking!" and sure enough she broke. "Did I not say so?" said the darning needle. "I am too fine for such work."

"The needle is useless for sewing now," said the fingers, but they still held it fast, and the cook dropped some sealing-wax on the needle, and fastened her handkerchief with it in front.

"So now I am a breast-pin," said the darning-needle; "I knew very well I should come to honor some day: merit is sure to rise;" and she laughed quietly to herself. And there she sat as proudly as if she were in a state coach, and looked all around her. "May I be allowed to ask if you are made of gold?" she inquired of her neighbor, a pin; "you have a very

pretty appearance, and a curious head, although you are rather small. You must take pains to grow, for it is not every one who has sealing-wax dropped upon him;" and as she spoke, the darning-needle drew herself up so proudly that she fell out of the handkerchief right into the sink, which the cook was cleaning. "Now I am going on a journey," said the needle, as she floated away with the dirty water; "I do hope I shall not be lost." But she really was lost in a gutter. "I am too fine for this world," said the darning-needle, as she lay in the gutter; "but I know who I am, and that is always some comfort."

One day something lying close to the darning-needle glittered so splendidly that



she thought it was a diamond; yet it was only a piece of broken bottle. The darning-needle spoke to it, because it sparkled, and represented herself as a breast-pin. "I suppose you are really a diamond?" she said.

"Why yes, something of the kind," he replied.

"I have been in a lady's work-box," said the darning-needle, "and this lady was

the cook. She had on each hand five fingers, and anything so conceited as these five fingers I have never seen."

"Were they not high-born?"

"High-born!" said the darning-needle, "no, indeed, but so haughty."

One day a couple of street boys were paddling in the gutter, for they sometimes found old nails, farthings, and other treasures. "Hallo!" cried one, as he pricked himself with the darning-needle, "here's a fellow for you."

"I am not a fellow, I am a young lady," said the darning-needle; but no one heard her.

The sealing-wax had come off, and she was quite black; but black makes a person look slender, so she thought herself even finer than before.

"Here comes an egg-shell sailing along," said one of the boys; so they stuck the darning-needle in the egg-shell, and it floated along.

"White walls, and I am black myself," said the darning-needle; "that looks well. Now I can be seen, but I hope I shall not be sea-sick, or I shall break again." She was not sea-sick, and she did not break. "It is a good thing against sea-sickness to have a steel stomach and not to forget one's own importance. Now my sea-sickness is past; delicate people can stand a great deal."

Crack went the shell, as a wagon passed over it. "Good heavens, how it crushes!" said the darning-needle; but she did not break, though the wagon went over her as she lay at full length in the gutter; and there let her lie.





The Child in the Grave.

THERE was mourning in the house, sorrow in every heart. The youngest child, a boy four years old, the joy and hope of his parents, had died. There still remained to them two daughters, the elder of whom was about to be confirmed—good, charming girls both; but the child that one has lost always seems the dearest; and here it was the youngest, and a son. The sisters mourned as young hearts can, and were especially moved at the sight of their parents' sorrow. The father was bowed down, and the mother completely struck down by the great grief. Day and night she had been busy about the sick child, and had tended, lifted, and carried it; she had felt how it was a part of herself.

In her grief she fell away from God, and then there came dark thoughts, thoughts of death, of everlasting death, that man was but dust in the dust, and that with this life all was ended.

In her heaviest hours she could weep no more, and she thought not of the young daughters who were still left to her. The

tears of her husband fell upon her forehead, but she did not look at him. Her thoughts were with the dead child.

The coffin was carried to the grave. The disconsolate mother sat with her young daughters. She looked at her daughters, and yet did not see them, for her thoughts were no longer busy at the domestic hearth. She gave herself up to her grief, and grief tossed her to and fro as the sea tosses a ship without compass or rudder. So the day of the funeral passed away, and similar days followed, of dark, wearying pain. With moist eyes and mournful glances, the sorrowing daughters and the afflicted husband looked upon her who would not hear their words of comfort.

It seemed as though she knew sleep no more; and yet He would now have been her best friend, who would have strengthened her body, and poured peace into her soul. They persuaded her to seek her couch, and she lay still there, like one who slept. One night her husband was listening, as he often did, to her breathing, and fully believed that she had now found rest and relief. He folded his arms and prayed, and soon fell into a deep healthy sleep; and thus he did not notice that his wife rose, threw on her clothes, and silently glided from the house, to go where her thoughts always lingered—to the grave which held her child.

She stole through the garden and passed into the field beyond, where a foot-path led to the church-yard. No one saw her; she saw no one. It was a beautiful starry night; the air was mild. She entered the church-yard, she reached the little grave; it was like one large bouquet of fragrant



flowers. She sat down and bowed her head over the grave, as though through the thick covering of earth she could discern the dear little boy whose smile she remembered so well.

Some time passed away. Was it a dream? for a voice close in her ear addressed her. "What wilt thou? go down into the grave to thy child?" it demanded. That voice so deep, yet so clear—it thrilled her very soul. She looked up, and saw standing beside her a man wrapped in a heavy black cloak, and with a hood over his head, but she could see his face under the hood, and though stern, that face inspired confidence, and his eyes, though grave, sparkled with the fire of youth.

"Darest thou follow me?" inquired the form. "For I am Death." She bowed her head in token of assent. All at once the thousands of stars above shone each with a splendor like that of the full moon; then for a moment the bright varied colors of the flowers on the grave glittered before her; then they too vanished, the surface of the earth yielded beneath her feet like soft hovering drapery, and she sank. Death had spread his black mantle over her, and all was darkness.

The long lappets of Death's black mantle fell aside, and she stood in a wide hall, a pleasant soothing twilight surrounding her. But close to her she beheld her child, and in another second held him tight to her heart. He smiled on her more sweetly, more joyously than ever during his life-time; she uttered a cry, but it was not audible, for the hall was filled with the sound of music, now swelling high and loud, now dying away.

"My sweet mother! my own mother!" said the child. It was the old familiar voice; kiss followed kiss—what happiness was this for the poor mother! "Look, look!" he cried; "there is nothing like this on earth! see what a blessed land!"

But the mother could see nothing save black night; she saw with earthly eyes, not as the child whom God had called to Himself could see. Likewise with the music, she could hear the sweet tones, but could not understand the words.

"Now I can fly, mother," said the child; "fly together with all the other happy children, straight into the Paradise of God. O, I love that so much; but when you weep as you are weeping now, it calls me back, and I cannot fly."

She kissed him again and again, holding him fast the while. All at once her name was called overhead in such a sad, imploring tone! what could it mean? "O, don't you hear?" said the child; "it is father calling thee."

And again, after a few seconds, she heard deep sighs, sighs as from the hearts of weeping children. "My sisters!" exclaimed the child. "O, mother, surely you have not forgotten them?"

And now she remembered those dear ones she had left in her home, and great fear came upon her.

"Mother, the bells of Paradise are ringing," said the child. "Mother, the sun is rising!" And an overpowering light streamed forth upon her—and lo! the child was gone, and she was lifted up. All was cold around her; she lifted her head, and found herself lying in the churchyard among the flowers of her child's grave.





What the Moon Saw.

I AM a poor boy in one of the narrowest back streets of a great town. I have plenty of light, for my room is at the top of the house. When I first came to live there I felt very lonely and dispirited; instead of the green woods round my home, I had only the smoky chimneys for my horizon. At last, an old familiar face looked into mine, a friend from my lost home—the only thing that was not altered round me—the dear old moon! She shone in upon me with her kind, round, beaming face, just as she shone between the willows on the moor. I kissed my hand to her, and she shone straight into my room and promised to tell me of the things which she had seen.

These are some of the tales she told me.

The Spinning-Wheel.

"Some years ago," said the moon, "I was in Copenhagen. I looked in at the window of a poorly-furnished room. The father and mother were sleeping soundly, but the little child was wide awake. Close by stood the mother's spinning-wheel, and of all the things in the house the child loved the spinning-wheel best of all. Perhaps because he might never touch it. And now, father and mother were asleep; he looked first at them, then at the wheel, and soon afterwards came one little, naked foot, and then another, out of the bed, then two little white legs, and then—bang! there he stood on the floor. He turned once more to see if his father and mother really slept; yes, they slept soundly; and gently, in his short, white nightshirt, he pattered across to the wheel and began to spin. I kissed his golden hair and bright blue eyes; it was a pretty picture. The curtain moved; his mother woke and looked out, and thought she saw a little elf at play. 'For heaven's sake, wake and tell me what it is!' she cried, to her husband. He started up and rubbed his eyes at sight of the busy, happy child. 'Why, it is our Bertel!' he cried.

"That," said the moon, "I saw years ago. But only yesterday, as I was looking on a bay in the eastern coast of Zealand, and lighting up its woods and hills, I saw a torchlight procession of boats cross the quiet waters of the bay. They were not out for the eel-fishing; it was a great solemnity. Music rose from the boats, a song was sung, and I heard them cheer 'Hurrah for Bertel Thorwaldsen!' Then I thought of the lovely room where I had seen the little boy spinning in his nightshirt."

The Clown and the Columbine.

"I know a clown," said the moon, "who sets the theatre in a roar at the very sight of him, and that by no great art; it is his very nature that makes him so comic. He was a born clown when he was a little lad romping with his playfellows. If he had been tall and slender he would have been

make him break out into loud laughter: at first she would be sad as he was, then calmer, then full of painful merriment. 'I know what is the matter with you,' she cried; 'you are in love!'

"'I in love?' he cried; 'that would be a capital farce; how the public would applaud!'

"'Yes, you are in love,' she went on; 'and what is more, you are in love with me!'

The clown executed a clever leap, and all his melancholy was gone. And yet the pretty columbine had spoken the truth.

"A few days ago the poor columbine died; and the harlequin was allowed to be absent. The manager wanted to bring out something very comic, so that the public might not feel the loss of the harlequin and columbine, and therefore the clown was required to be doubly amusing; he danced and leaped, and the public was quite satisfied. 'Bravo, bravissimo!' they cried, and applauded frantically.

"Late at night, when the performance was over, he wandered out of the town to the lonely cemetery. The wreath of flowers upon the columbine's grave was already faded; the clown sat down upon the grave, his head leaning upon his hand, his eyes upturned to me. It was a scene for a painter—the clown, in his gay dress, sitting on the columbine's grave."



the first tragedian, for his soul was fired with great and heroic thoughts; as it was, he played the part of clown.

"The pretty columbine was very kind to him, but, for all that, she preferred the harlequin for a husband.

"When the clown was in his saddest mood she was the only one who could



By the Ganges.

"Last night," the moon said, "I glided through the clear air of the Indian land and watched my reflection in the sacred Ganges. A Hindoo maiden stole out of the thicket, fair as Eve, light as the young gazelle.

"I could read the thoughts through her fine, transparent skin; the thorny lianas tore her sandals; but she trod hurriedly forwards; the wild beast returning from the river, whither it had gone to quench its thirst, sprang aside in terror, for the maiden held in her hand a burning lamp. She approached the river, placed the lamp tenderly in the swift current, and watched it glide swiftly away; the flame shook and quivered, as if it were on the point of being extinguished, but it burnt on, and the girl's dark, gleaming eyes, half veiled by their long, silken lashes, followed it with an anxious glance. She knew that if the light burnt on as long as the lamp was in sight, her lover was still alive; but if it went out, it was a sign that he was dead.

"The lamp burned bright, and her heart beat in thankfulness; she sank upon her knees and prayed."

Pe and Soui-Hong.

"Last night I looked down upon a lawn in China," said the moon. "My rays lit up the bare walls that form the streets; here and there is a gate, but it is tightly shut, for what matters the world outside to a Chinaman? At the foot of an altar sat a young priest; he seemed to be praying, but in the midst

of his prayer he sank into a reverie; a sinful reverie it must have been, for his cheeks glowed fever red. I know whither his thoughts were wandering. At the remotest end of the town, on the flat stone-paved roof where the parapet seems built of porcelain, there stands the fair Pe, with her slanting, roguish eyes, her pouting lips, and her tiny feet. Her slipper was narrow, but her heart was narrower still. Before her stood a glass bowl of gold and silver fish; she stirred the water softly with a thin, painted stick; very softly; for she too was dreaming.



"She was not thinking of the gold and silver fish in the bowl; her thoughts were far away toward the temple, where the young priest stood at the foot of the altar."



By the Hun's Grave.

"Along the shore stretches a fragrant wood of oaks. The great road passes here and near it is the heap of stones marking the Hun's grave. A carriage came rolling by, and the passengers admired the oaks, but had no eyes for the heap of stones.

"Then there came up a painter. His eyes sparkled, and he whistled aloud. The nightingales answered, one outvying the other. 'Hold your noise!' he cried, as he noted down all the colors and half-tints. 'Blue, lilac, madder-brown; it will make a capital picture.'

"Last of all there came up a poor girl; she sat down to rest on the Hun's grave, and laid down her burden; her sweet, pale face turned towards the forest, her eyes shone bright as they gazed on sea and sky. Her hands were folded as if she were in prayer. She did not understand her own feeling; but I know that in years to come, the landscape will live fairer and truer in her memory than on the painter's canvas."



The Long Journey.

"I knew an old maid," said the moon; "every winter she wore a yellow cloak; it was her only one, so it was always in fashion. Every summer she wore the same bonnet and the same blue gown.

"She visited no one but an old lady who lived just opposite her, and last year she visited no one at all; her friend was dead. All alone, the old maid sat sewing at her window, where in the summer there bloomed some pretty flowers, and in the winter a box of fresh cresses. Last month I missed her from her place in the window; but I knew she was alive, for I had not yet seen her start on the long journey about which she and her friend talked so often.

"'Yes,' she used to say, 'when I come to die I shall go a longer journey than I have ever taken yet in my whole life. Our family vault is six miles from here, outside the town, and I shall have to be taken there that I may sleep among my own people.'

"Yesterday a hearse stopped before the

house, a coffin was carried out, and I knew that she was dead; the coffin was placed inside the hearse, and away they drove on the long journey."



The Children and the Stork.

"A little girl sat watching a stork who had built her nest on the old oak tree. A little boy came out and stood by the little girl; they were brother and sister. 'What are you looking at?' he said.

"I am looking at the stork," she said; 'the neighbor's wife says he is going to bring us a little brother or sister to-day, and I want to see him bring it.'

"He will do no such thing," said the boy; 'I know better. She told me the very same thing, but I saw her laugh when she said it; and I asked her if she dared say, "upon my soul and honor," and she dared not, so I know that it is all a tale to amuse us children with.'

"But where will it come from then?"

"God will bring it," said the boy. 'He

carries the babies under His cloak; but no one can see Him, so that we shall not be able to see Him when He brings it.' At the same moment the branches of the elder tree rustled overhead; the children clasped their hands and looked at each other; it was certainly God Who was come to bring the baby.

"The cottage door opened and the neighbor's wife looked out. 'Come in,' said she, smiling; 'come and see what the stork has brought you; it is a little brother.'



The Little Girl and the Chickens.

"Yesterday," said the moon, "I was looking down into a little court-yard; there I saw a hen and eleven chickens; a pretty little girl was playing round them. The hen was frightened and spread her wings over the brood; and the little girl's father came out and scolded the child. To-night I happened to be looking down into the self-same yard. The little girl came out, stole on tip-toe to the hen-house, and crept in among the hens and chickens.

"They cackled and clucked in a great fright, and the little girl ran after them. I

saw it all clearly, for I was looking through a hole in the wall. I felt quite angry with the naughty girl, and was very glad when her father came out, and, seizing her roughly by the arm, scolded her more severely than before.

"She threw back her head, and great tears stood in her blue eyes. 'What are you doing here?' he cried.

"She wept. 'I wanted to go in and kiss the hen,' she said, 'and ask her to forgive me for frightening her yesterday.'

"Her father kissed her on her sweet innocent brow; and I, too, kissed her eyes and lips."



The Comedy.

"This evening I saw a German play acted," said the moon. "It was in a little town. A stable had been turned into a theatre. A little iron chandelier hung beneath the ceiling, and that it might be made to disappear into the ceiling, as it

does in great theatres, when the *ting-ting* of the prompter's bell is heard, a great inverted tub had been placed just above it.

"*Ting-ting!*" and the little iron chandelier suddenly rose at least half a yard and disappeared in the tub; and that was the sign that the play was going to begin. A young nobleman and his lady, who happened to be passing through the little town, were present at the performance, and consequently the house was crowded. But under the chandelier was a vacant place like a little crater; not a single soul sat there, for the tallow was dropping, drip, drip! I saw everything, for it was so warm in there that every loophole had been opened. The male and female servants stood outside, peeping through the chinks, although a real policeman was inside, threatening them with a stick. Close by the orchestra could be seen the noble young couple in two old arm-chairs, which were usually occupied by his worship the mayor and his lady; but these latter were to-day obliged to content themselves with wooden forms, just as if they had been ordinary citizens.

"The town did not often receive visits from persons of nobility, and the people were never tired of gazing on the young nobleman and his lady, or of talking about them, though the talk was not complimentary.

"That shows how one bird of prey drives out another,' was the whispered remark of the townspeople; and everything seemed to be more solemn and imposing. The candles sputtered, the crowd was rapped on the knuckles, and I shone through the whole comedy."



The Marsh King's Daughter.

THE storks tell to their young ones many a story, which are almost always tales of the moorland and the sedge; and they are always adapted to the age of the listener. The very youngest are satisfied if they hear "Kribble-krabble-plurry murry;" they think that is very nice; but the elder ones like something with a deeper meaning, or a fragment of family history. One of the very oldest stories told by the storks is known to us all; it is that of Moses lying among the reeds on the banks of the Nile. The second is not nearly so widely known. It has been handed down for thousands of years from mother stork to mother stork.

The first pair of storks who brought over the story, and were mixed up in it themselves, had their summer residence in the Viking's palace on the moorland in Wendysse, at the northern point of Jutland. The place is still a vast, desolate moor, and whatever attempts to pass over it sink out of sight.

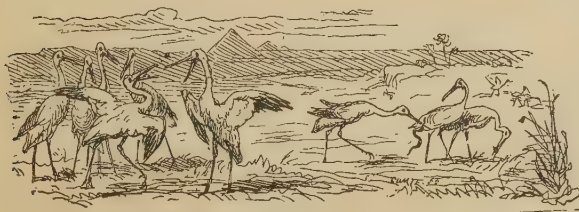
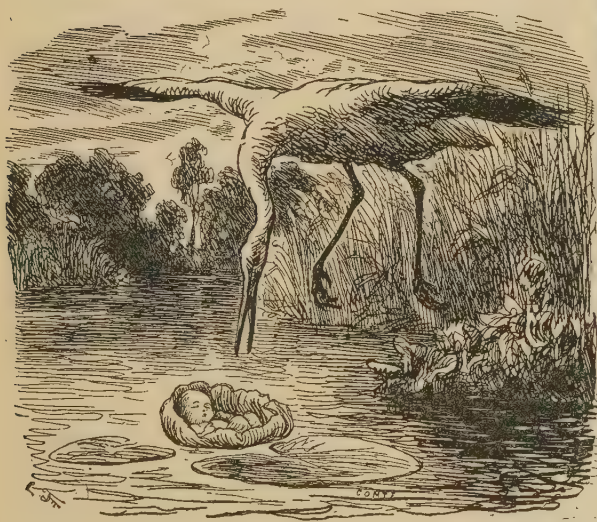
One evening the father stork stayed out very late, and when he came home he said

he had seen the princess whom they knew in Egypt. He had been to the moor, and, he said, "the princess came there with two of her maids, all in the shape of swans. The princess took off her swan's dress, and gave it to her maids to hold while she looked for a flower which grew there, and which she said was the only thing that would cure her sick father in Egypt. The maids tore the robe into pieces and flew away.

"The princess cried aloud, and her tears fell on the alder stump. It was no common alder; it was the marsh king himself, who reigns over the whole moor. I saw him stretch out his knotty arms like long, shining branches, and clutch at the princess. The poor child fled from him in terror; she sped along the green, shaking bog; but the ground would not bear my weight, much less hers, and I saw her sink below the fen, and the alder stump fol-



lowed her and dragged her down. Black bubbles rose from the marsh, and then every trace of them had vanished. The princess lies buried in the marsh, and will never bring a flower to Egypt. It would



have broken your heart, little mother, if you had seen it.

"I shall go there every day to see if anything comes of it," said the father stork; and so he did.

A long time passed away, and then the stork saw a stem rise from the pond. When

Egyptian princess, that for a moment the stork thought that it must be she; but when he had taken time to reflect, he decided that it was the child of the princess and the marsh king who lay sleeping in the water-lily.

"She cannot possibly stay here," said the



it had pierced the surface of the water, it unfolded into a cluster of leaves, with one large bud in the centre. The stork flew over the pond and saw the bud open under the burning sun; inside the flower lay a lovely little baby, as fresh and bright as if it had just left its bath. It looked so like the

father stork; and there are too many of us already in the nest. Stay! I know what I will do with her. The Viking's wife has no children; she has often longed for a little one, and I hear them say the stork will bring one some day. I will take them at their word. How delighted they will all be!"



The stork lifted the little creature from the lily, flew to the Viking's palace, and laid the baby in the lap of the Viking's wife.

The Viking's wife was delighted with the little baby. She kissed it and caressed it, but the little thing fought her, and scratched her, and was as wild as a tiger. At last it cried itself to sleep; then night

its place lay the beautiful, cross baby. The Viking's wife learned the secret. In the daytime the child looked like its mother, but had the ugly disposition of its father, the marsh king; in the night it changed to a frog, but had the lovely disposition of the princess. The Viking was away, and his wife determined not to tell him about it, but to let him see the child only in the day



came and the Viking's wife folded her in her arms and went to sleep too. In the night she awoke and missed her baby. She hunted all over the bed but could not find it. At the foot of the bed, however, lay an ugly green frog. The Viking's wife was about to throw it outdoors, but it looked at her so pitifully that she let it remain. In the morning, the frog was gone, but in

time. So the child grew to be a beautiful maiden, but so wild that she made the Viking's wife a great deal of trouble.

The storks had been to Egypt many times. The young storks were grown and they had delightful times on the Nile. But in the palace there was no pleasure. The two maids had come back and treacherously told that the young princess had been shot



by a bowman. The master lay stiff and helpless, waiting for the magic flower that alone could cure him.



The little girl at the Viking's house had been named Helga. As she grew older, she seemed to get wilder; only as evening approached was she to be reasoned with, and when the sun had set, and her form had changed, she would sit cowering in the shadow. Her body was much larger than that of the largest frog, and all the more hideous because of its size. She looked like a misshapen dwarf with a frog's head and webbed fingers. Her eyes were very sorrowful, and her voice was like the inarticulate sobbing of a child in its sleep. The Viking's wife would take her on her knees, forgetting her ugly shape; and, looking into her piteous eyes, she often said: "I almost wish you would stay always in your present form. My silent frog-child is not so terrible as the beautiful girl I see by day."

The Viking returned from one of his many warlike excursions, and brought with

him, as a prisoner, a young Christian priest. Helga heard them tell how they were going to put him to death, and she thought it would be sport to see them. But when it came night, and she had become a frog, she felt sorry for the poor priest. She crept to the dungeon where he lay, cut his bonds, and hopped away to the stable and showed him a fleet horse. He leaped upon the horse, took the frog in front of him and galloped away. As soon as the sun rose, the priest was astonished to see the frog changed to a beautiful maiden, who jumped from the horse and tried to run away. Fearing witchcraft, he offered a prayer and made the sign of the cross, and immediately Helga was subdued.

There was a fierce struggle going on in Helga's heart, but the priest prayed until the spell was broken and she became as gentle as a lamb. Then he took her again on the horse, but he made her ride behind him, and they galloped on. Towards evening they fell in with a band of robbers who killed the priest and took Helga with them away off toward the moor.



But when the sun set the spell returned and Helga was changed to a frog. The robbers thought she had run away and they went in search of her, leaving the frog to hop away into the bushes unmolested. The Christian's prayers were sunk deep into her heart, and she sat and sobbed all through the night. At last she

day rise again. The light within thee is a ray from God Himself, and aspires back to its source. I am come from the land of death. I cannot lead thee to Hedebei to receive Christian baptism until thou hast drawn from the pond on the moor the living root of thy being." He raised her on the horse and placed in her hand a golden



prayed herself that she might have her nature changed, and a great peace came into her soul. Then the sun arose, and the dead priest appeared to her, sitting on his horse, with a cross in his hand.

"Child of clay," said the Christian priest, "thou wast made of the dust of the earth, and from that dust thou shalt one

censer; a cloud of richest incense rose from it, and the wounds in the forehead of the priest shone like a wreath of stars. He lifted the cross, and the horse started away through the forest.

On sped the horse, across marsh and moor and swamp, towards the lonely pond. The priest lifted the cross; it shone like

gold. He sang aloud his litanies, and fair Helga joined her voice with his, as a child tries to falter out the hymns which its mother sings; she swung the golden censer to and fro, and every rush and reed broke out into blossom; a host of water-lilies rose to the surface of the desolate pond, and

Egyptian princess from the shores of the Nile.

The priest lifted up the sleeping form on to the horse, but the phantom steed sank under the weight, as if his body were but a cere-cloth floating in the wind. The sign of the cross was traced above it, and the



lay there like a gauzy veil of blossom; the hidden life in every seed and bud broke forth in flowers, and, stretched out along the pure, white petals, lay a sleeping woman, young and fair. Helga looked into the sleeping face, and thought for a moment that it was her own reflection in the water; but it was her mother whom she saw, the

airy shape grew strong, and bore its triple load away from the fen to the dry land.

As they touched the shore the cock crowed; the phantoms melted away; but the mother and child stood face to face.

"Is it I myself who look out from the waters?" cried the mother.



"Is it I myself who rise from the green sedge?" said Helga.

And in a moment mother and child lay clasped in each other's arms.

Just then the old father stork appeared in the reeds, with two swan's ropes which he laid at their feet. With much clapping of his beak he told them what he had heard the two lying princesses say to the king lying sick by the Nile, and how he could not be satisfied until he had punished them; so he stole their swan's dresses, and he and his sons had brought them all the way from Egypt. The mother and daughters soon put on the robes and went sailing away through the air.

Helga was sadly missed by the Viking's wife, who thought of her night and day. One night she dreamed that Helga was in her frog-like shape and she held her on her knee.

She pressed a kiss on Helga's forehead, and the hideous disguise fell away; Helga stood before her in all her beauty, sweet, gentle, and loving. She kissed her foster-mother's hands, thanked and blessed her for all her love and sorrow. "The Christ has conquered," she said, and then she rose up like a stately swan, spread her white wings, and flew away.

The Viking's wife awoke at the sound of the fluttering wings. She hurried to the window and saw the flocks of storks circling round the palace turrets. Opposite the place where she stood, and just over the well where Helga's wilful ways had so often filled her heart with dread, two white swans lingered and looked back at her with mild, loving eyes.

The swans bent their necks, as if in greeting; the Viking's wife spread out her arms and smiled, with tears in her eyes.

Then, with much clapping of beaks and rustling of wings, the whole army of storks and swans turned southward and flew away.

There was great rejoicing when the princess and Helga arrived in Egypt, where the storks visited them every year.





The Emperor's New Clothes.

MANY years ago, there was an emperor who had a new suit of clothes for every hour. He cared nothing for anything but new clothes. On a certain day two men arrived in the town and gave out that they were weavers, and that they had a most wonderful fabric, that was so fine that it could not be seen by any one who was stupid or who was not fit for his position.

The emperor sent for them to weave and make him a suit of clothes of the wonderful cloth, for, said he, it will show me who are unfit among my officers. So the two men set up their looms and they worked away at them when anyone was near; but they worked in the air, for there was nothing at all in the looms.

The emperor sent in his prime minister to look at the cloth. The two rogues were

very polite; they wished him to step nearer, and inquired whether he did not think the pattern very pretty and the colors brilliant.

"Good gracious!" he said to himself, "am I becoming stupid or unfit for my position?"

"Now what do you think of our work?" asked the two weavers.

"Oh, it is beautiful, lovely," said the bewildered old gentleman, looking through his spectacles. "I shall tell the emperor I approve of all I have seen very much."

After this the impostors applied for money in advance and more gold and silken thread, which they readily obtained, and stowed away in a box. Then they continued their pretended work at the looms, but not a single thread was used.

The emperor soon after sent another statesman to see how the weaving was going on, and to inquire whether the stuff would soon be ready. But it was exactly



the same with him as with the first. He almost made himself half blind with looking; but as there was nothing on the looms, he could see nothing. "I am

not stupid," said the man to himself; "I suppose, therefore, I am not fitted for my situation. That, however, is a ridiculous idea, but I must not say a word about it to anyone." So he praised the tissue he could not see. "It is really lovely," he said.



Everyone in the city talked about the beautiful fabric, and then the emperor expressed a wish to see for himself what this wonderful stuff was like. He approached the looms at which the two artful impostors were working with all their might, although there was not a single thread on the looms. "How is this?" said the emperor to himself. "I can see nothing; this is really dreadful. Am I stupid? Am I, as emperor, unfit for my position? It would be the most dreadful thing if that could happen to me. Oh, really, it is very beautiful," he said, aloud; "it merits my highest approval."

The whole suite who were with him looked, and looked, and could make no more of it than the others, but they said

after the emperor, "Yes, it is very pretty." They advised him to wear the magnificent dress for the first time in the great procession which was about to take place.

The whole night through, before the day when the procession was to take place, the two swindlers were up and stirring. They had lighted sixteen candles, and all the townspeople could see how hard they were working to finish the emperor's new clothes. They pretended to take the cloth down from the looms, they cut with great scissors in the air, they sewed with needles which had no thread in them, and at last they said: "The clothes are ready." The emperor came himself with his most distinguished nobles; and the swindlers lifted up one arm high in the air as if they were holding something, and said: "Look! here are the trousers, here is the coat, here is the mantle!" and so on. "It is as light and fine as cobweb; one would think one had nothing on, but that is just the beauty of it! May it please your imperial majesty graciously to take off your clothes," said the swindlers, "and we will put on your new ones here before the large mirror."





Soup from a Sausage Skewer.

THE mountain-king gave a great feast, and of course all the lady-mice of the best families were invited. As a matter of course, too, they criticised every dish, beginning with the soup. "It is like soup from a sausage skewer," said one, which was a very good joke. At least, the lady-mice thought so, for they nodded and squeaked and whispered it about, till the mouse-king heard it. He had often heard people mention "soup from a sausage skewer," and he resolved now to find out what it was. So he gave out that the lady who should find out how to make it should be queen, and they should have a year and a day to find it out.

The lady-mice all wished to be queen, but only four were willing to leave their homes and travel about the world to learn the secret.

At last the time was expired, and the king sat in his council chamber to hear the reports of the travelers. The first one said :

"I traveled away to the north in a big ship. I staid in the pantry, hoping that the cook could tell me, for I often heard him

speak of soup from a sausage skewer ; but though he made many nice things he never attempted to make that. At last I landed and journeyed away from the sea-coast, till I came to some lads and lassies dancing round a May-pole, and I stopped to rest and look at them, holding my sausage skewer tight in my mouth. All at once I saw the most charming little people coming toward me. They called themselves elves, and one of them pointed to the sausage skewer and said : 'That is just what we want.'

"I thought perhaps they wanted to make soup of it, so I lent it to them. They set it up in the middle of the green, and decorated it so beautifully that it was quite dazzling to look at, and all by waving their little wands. Then I heard the most beautiful music, like the tinkling of bells, the song of birds and the laughter of children. In a little while they all vanished but six, who brought me my skewer as bare as it was before. I told them my story and begged them to tell me how to make soup from the sausage skewer.

"Then the elf dipped his finger into the the cup of violet, and said to me, 'Look here ; I will anoint your pilgrim's staff, so that when you return to your own home and enter the king's castle, you have only to touch the king with your staff, and violets will spring forth and cover the whole of it, even in the coldest winter time ; so I think I have given you really something to carry home, and a little more than something.'"

But before the little mouse explained what this something more was, she stretched her staff out to the king, and as it touched

him the most beautiful bunch of violets sprang forth and filled the place with their perfume. The smell was so powerful that the mouse-king ordered the mice who stood nearest the chimney to thrust their tails into the fire, that there might be a smell of burning, for the perfume of the violets was overpowering, and not the sort of scent that every one liked.

is the wisest of all. She said the ant hill was the loftiest thing in the world, although close by it was a tree which was so high that none of them could see the top. One day an ant climbed up it so far that he got lost and could not find his way back for a whole day. When, at last, he got back and told them the tree was higher than the ant hill the queen had him put to death at once.



The second mouse said: "I was born in a library and by much nibbling at books I had learned the saying that 'poets can make soup out of a sausage skewer,' so I traveled toward the west to learn how to be a poet. I had found out from another book the saying: 'Go to the ant and learn wisdom,' and I traveled till I came to a great ant hill. The ants are very wise, and the queen ant

Oh, the ants are very wise, and the queen was so wise that I ate her up. Then I climbed the tree and the dryad gave me a feather from Phantæsus, which I nibbled at until I had eaten it all and became a poet, and here I am. I can give you poetry on the skewer, as much as you like."

"And is that all?" asked the king.

"That is all," said she.

"Then we will hear from the next mouse," said the king.

The fourth mouse came in next. She had just arrived, and was so afraid that she was late that she rushed in ahead of her turn. "I went off," said she, "to the largest town, and found myself in the house of the gaol keeper. They had just brought in a prisoner, and the keeper said he had been talking too much, and he couldn't make

the tower. She said it was only a saying among men, and was understood in many ways. That was the truth about it, she said, and truth was worth more than all the soup in the world.

They were all taken aback at this, but in rushed the third mouse, saying: "I know how to make soup from a sausage skewer, and will do it. Will you now set the kettle on the fire—so? Now pour

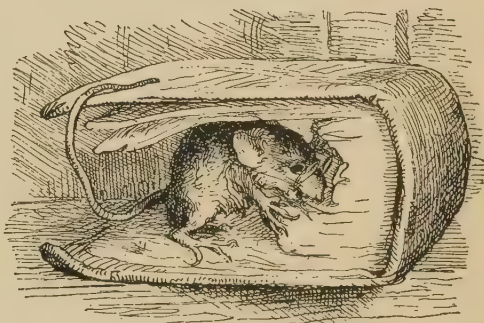


it out. 'It was like making soup from a sausage skewer,' he said, 'but it might cost him his life.' I became interested in the prisoner at once, and found him in his cell. We soon became friends, but one day they came and took him away. He kissed his hand to me with tears in his eyes, but he never came back. The keeper caught me and put me in a cage, but his little girl let me go.

"I hastened away, and visited an owl who lived with her young in the top of

the water on—quite full; place it on the fire; make up a good blaze that the water may boil; it must boil over and over. There, now I throw in the skewer. Will the mouse-king be pleased now to dip his tail into the boiling water?"

But the mouse-king's tail had only just touched the hot steam, when he sprang away from the chimney in a great hurry, exclaiming: "Oh, certainly, by all means, you must be my queen."





The Snow Queen.

A WICKED hobgoblin one day made looking-glass which had the power of making everything good or beautiful look very small, and everything ugly and bad very large and grand. The hobgoblin kept a school, and all who went to it talked very loud of the bad things they had seen. They carried the looking-glass all over the world, and the people of every nation looked through it. At last they tried to take it to heaven, but it slipped through their fingers, and broke into thousands of pieces. But now it was worse than before, for the pieces flew about, and got into people's eyes, and then it was just as though they saw in the looking-glass. When a piece got into the heart, it made it cold as ice.

In a large town a little boy and a little girl lived opposite each other. The little boy was named Kay, and the little girl

was called Gerda. The houses projected over the narrow street, so that they could step from one window to another, and so they played together all the time. A water-pipe ran across the passage, and on this their mothers put their flower pots, and Kay and Gerda tended the flowers. One day a piece of the glass flew in Kay's eye, and a piece got in his heart. He began to find fault, and destroy Gerda's roses, saying that they were no better than weeds.

When she afterwards brought out the picture book, he said: "It is only fit for babies in long clothes;" and when grandmother told any stories, he would interrupt her with "but;" or he would get behind her chair, put on a pair of spectacles, and imitate her very cleverly, to make people laugh. By-and-by he began to mimic the



speech and gait of persons in the street. All that was peculiar or disagreeable in a person he would imitate directly, and people said: "That boy will be very clever; he has a remarkable genius." But it was the piece of glass in his eye, and the coldness in his heart, that made him act like this. He would even tease little Gerda, who loved him with all her heart.

One day Kay put on his thick gloves, took his little sledge and went to the great square to play with the other boys.

The boldest among the boys would often tie their sledges to country people's carts, and go with them a good way. This was capital. But while they were all amusing themselves, and Kay with them, a great sledge came by; it was painted white, and in it sat some one wrapped in a

rough white fur, and wearing a white cap. The sledge drove twice round the square, and Kay fastened his own little sledge to it, so that when it went away, he followed with it. It went faster and faster right through the next street, and then the person who drove turned round and nodded pleasantly to Kay, just as if they were acquainted with each other, but whenever Kay wished to loosen his little sledge the driver nodded again, so Kay sat still, and they drove out through the town gate.

The snow-flakes became larger and larger till they appeared like great white



chickens. All at once they sprang on one side, the great sledge stopped, and the person who had driven it rose up. The fur and the cap, which were made entirely of snow, fell off, and he saw a lady, tall and white; it was the Snow Queen.

Kay looked at her, and saw that she was beautiful; she did not now seem to be made of ice, as when he had seen her through his window, and she had nodded to him. In his eyes she was perfect, and he did not feel at all afraid. He told her he could do mental arithmetic, as far as fractions, and that he knew the number of

square miles and the number of inhabitants in the country. And she always smiled so that he thought he did not know enough yet. They flew over woods and lakes, over sea and land; below them roared the wild wind; the wolves howled and the snow crackled; over them flew the black screaming crows, and above all shone the moon, clear and bright; and so Kay passed through the long winter's night, and by day he slept at the feet of the Snow Queen.

But how fared little Gerda during Kay's absence? What had become of him no one knew, nor could anyone give the slightest information, excepting the boys, who said that he had tied his sledge to another very large one, which had driven through the street, and out at the town gate.



"Kay is dead and gone," said little Gerda to the sparrows.

"We don't believe it," they replied; and at last little Gerda began to doubt it herself. "I will put on my new red shoes," she said one morning; "those that Kay has never seen, and then I will go down to the river, and ask for him." It was quite early when she kissed her old grandmother, who was still asleep; then she put on her red shoes, and went quietly alone out of the town gates towards the river. "Is it true that you have taken my little playmate away from me?" she said to the river. "I will give you my red shoes if you will give him back to me." And it seemed as if the waves nodded to her in a strange manner. Then she took off her red shoes, crept into a boat that lay among the reeds, and threw the shoes from the farther end of the boat into the water, but it was not fastened, and her movement sent it gliding away from the land.

After a long time an old woman came down to the river bank, reached out and pulled the boat to the shore. Then she



took Gerda to a little cottage where she lived. The old woman was a witch, but she would not tell Gerda anything about Kay. She wanted Gerda to stay with her, so she took off her dress and stockings, so that she would not go far away. But Gerda thought she must find Kay, so she ran away just as she was. She ran a long way, and then she sat down to rest, and a great crow came hopping to her across the snow.

She asked him if he knew where Kay was, and he told her, in crow talk, which she understood very well, that the princess lived near by; he was quite sure that Kay had married her. But the crow was mistaken, for when she went to the palace, the princess' husband was not Kay at all, though he looked like him. They treated



her very well at the palace, and when they heard her story, they sent her on her way in a gold coach with four horses.

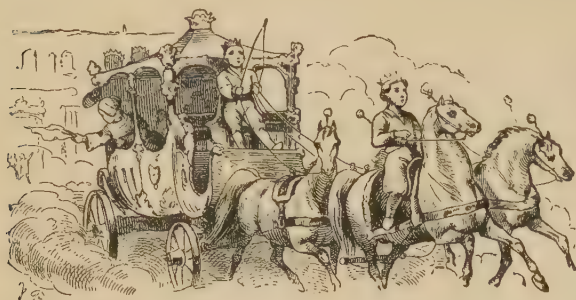
The coach drove on through a thick forest, where it lighted up the way like a torch, and dazzled the eyes of some robbers. "It is gold! it is gold!" cried they, rushing forward, and seizing the horses. Then they struck the little jockeys, the coachman, and the footman dead, and pulled little Gerda out of the carriage.

"She is fat and pretty, and she has been fed with the kernels of nuts," said the old robber-woman, who had a long beard and



eyebrows that hung over her eyes. "She is as good as a little lamb; how nice she will taste!" and as she said this, she drew forth a shining knife, that glittered horribly. "Oh!" screamed the old woman at the same moment; for her own daughter, who held her back, had bitten her in the ear. She was a wild and naughty girl, and the mother called her an ugly thing, and had not time to kill Gerda.

"She shall play with me," said the little robber-girl; "she shall give me her muff and her pretty dress, and sleep with me in my bed." And then she bit her mother



again, and made her spring in the air, and jump about; and all the robbers laughed.

"I will have a ride in the coach," said the little robber-girl; and she would have her own way; for she was so self-willed and obstinate. She and Gerda seated themselves in the coach, and drove away, over stumps and stones, into the depths of the forest.

The coach stopped in the courtyard of a robber's castle, the walls of which were cracked from top to bottom. Ravens and crows flew in and out of the holes and crevices, while great bull-dogs, either of which looked as if it could swallow a man, were



jumping about; but they were not allowed to bark. In the large old smoky hall a bright fire was burning on the stone floor. There was no chimney; so the smoke went up to the ceiling, and found a way out for itself. Soup was boiling in a large cauldron, and hares and rabbits were roasting on the spit.

"You shall sleep with me," said the robber-girl, after they had had something to eat and drink. So she took Gerda to a corner of the hall, where some straw and carpets were laid down. Above them, on



laths and perches, were more than a hundred doves, and two wood-pigeons were high up in a wicker-cage. In the corner of the room a reindeer was tied by a rope.

The little robber-girl made Gerda tell the story of how she came out so far in the world, and then she went to sleep. But Gerda could not sleep for thinking of Kay, and how she could find him.

Then the wood-pigeons said, "Coo-coo; we have seen little Kay. A white fowl carried his sledge, and he sat in the carriage of the Snow Queen."

"What are you saying up there?" cried Gerda. "Where was the Snow Queen going?"



"She was most likely traveling to Lapland, where there is always snow and ice. Ask the reindeer."

"Yes, there is always snow and ice," said the reindeer; "and it is a glorious place; you can leap and run about freely on the sparkling icy plains. The Snow Queen has her summer tent there, but her strong castle is at the North Pole."

In the morning Gerda told all that the wood-pigeons had said; and the little robber-girl looked quite serious, and nodded her head. "Do you know where Lapland is?" she asked the reindeer.

"Who should know better than I do?" said the animal.

"Now listen," said the robber-girl; "all our men are gone away—only mother is here; but at noon she always drinks out of a great bottle, and afterwards sleeps for a little while; and then I'll do something for you."

When the mother had drunk out of the bottle, and was gone to sleep, the robber gave Gerda her warm mitts, and seated her on the reindeer, and away he went toward his home in the north. At last they came to the palace of the Snow Queen. It was

formed of drifted snow, and the windows and doors of the cutting winds.

Little Kay was blue with the cold when Gerda found him, but he did not feel it, for the Snow Queen had kissed away his shiverings, and his heart was already a lump of ice. He was dragging blocks of ice to and fro, and piling them up, and admiring them as though they were the prettiest thing in the world. This was because he had the piece of glass still sticking in his eye.

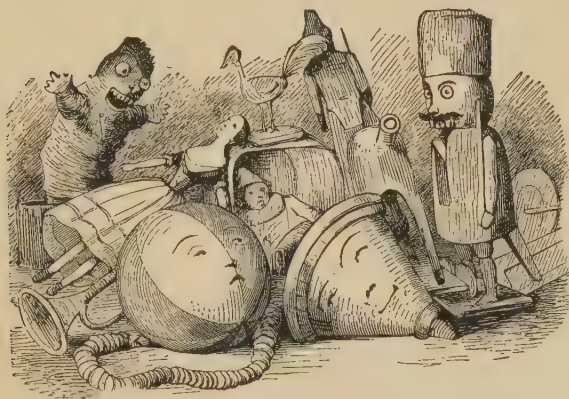
Gerda threw her arms round his neck, and exclaimed: "Kay, dear little Kay!"

But he sat quite still, stiff and cold.

Then little Gerda wept hot tears, which fell on his breast, and penetrated into his heart, and thawed the lump of ice, and washed away the little pieces of glass which had stuck there. Then Kay burst into tears, and he wept so that the splinter of glass swam out of his eye. Then he looked all round him, and said: "How cold it is," and he clung to Gerda, and she laughed and wept for joy.

Then they took each other by the hand, and went forth from the great palace of ice, and soon reached home.





The Two Lovers.

A HUMMING-TOP and a ball were lying together in a box of playthings, and the top said to the ball: "Shall we not be engaged to each other?" But the ball, which was covered with morocco, and thought as much of herself as any fine lady could do, would not listen to such a thing.

The next day came the little boy who owned the playthings; he painted the top red and yellow, and drove a brass nail into the middle of it. It looked most brilliant when it spun round. "Look at me," said the top to the ball; "shan't we be engaged? We suit each other so exactly; you can leap and I can dance. No one could possibly be happier than we should be." "Indeed! That is your opinion," said the ball. "You are probably not aware that my papa and mamma were morocco slippers, and that I have a Spanish cork in my body." "Well, I'm made of mahogany," said the top. "The mayor himself turned me; he has a lathe of his own, and he turned me just for his amusement." "May I depend upon that?" asked the ball. "May I never be whipped if it's false!" replied the top. "You know how

to plead your cause well," said the ball; "but indeed I cannot; I am as good as engaged to a swallow. Every time I fly up in the air he puts his head out of his nest and says: 'Will you?' And I have said yes, in my own mind, so that it is as good as a half engagement. But I shall never forget you." "Much good that will do," said the top. And they did not speak to each other again.

The next day the ball was taken out by the little boy. The top watched it flying high into the air like a bird, till it flew right out of sight. It came back again after awhile, but it gave a great bounce every time it touched the earth. The ninth time, however, the ball stayed away, and did not come down again; the little boy looked and looked for it, but off it was. "I know very well where she is," sighed the top; "she is in the swallow's nest; she has married the swallow."

The more the top thought of her, the more desperately in love he grew. He danced about and spun round, but his thoughts were always with the ball, who daily grew



fairer and fairer in his memory. Years passed away, and now it was an old love. The top himself was no longer young. But behold ! one day he was gilt all over—never had he looked so handsome before ; he was a gold top now, and spun till he hummed again. This was something like. But all at once he sprang up too high, and off he was. They sought and sought for him, even down into the cellar : but he was not to be found.

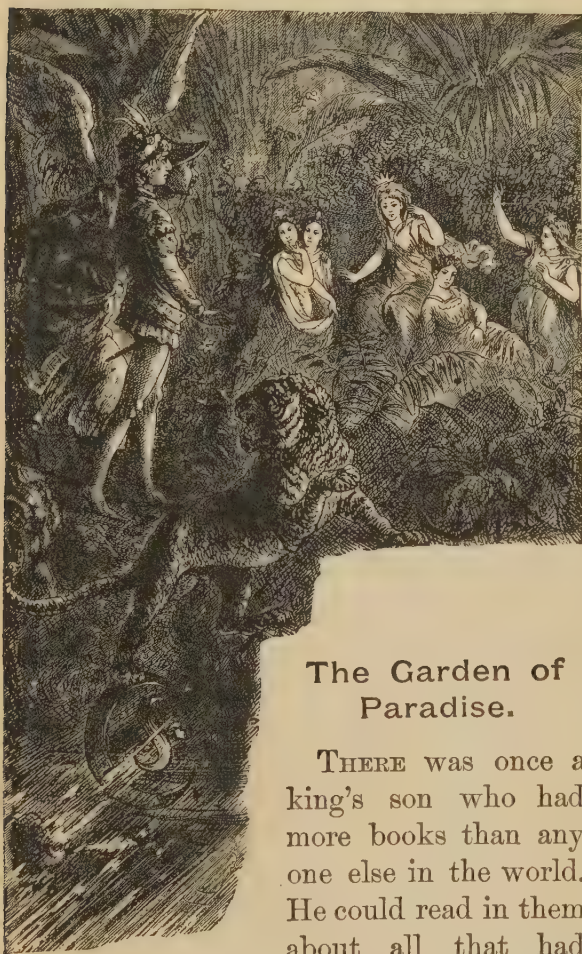
He had jumped right into the dust-bin, among all kinds of things—cabbage-stalks, and dirt that had fallen down from the roof. "Well, this is a pretty situation. I shall soon lose my fine gilding here. What a low set I have fallen among." He glanced furtively at a long, leafless cabbage-stalk, and at a queer-looking round thing, that looked like an old apple. But it was no

apple ; it was a ball that had lain for years in the roof-gutter, and been soaked through and through.

"Thank goodness, here comes one of my own class, to whom I can speak," said the ball. "I am really made of morocco ; and I have a Spanish cork in my body, though no one would think so to look at me now. I was once on the point of marrying a swallow, but I fell into the roof-gutter, where I lay for five years, and was quite soaked through.

But the top did not say a word. The servant girl came up just then. "Hallo ! here is a gold top," cried she. And the top came once more to honor and distinction, but nothing was ever heard of the ball. The top never spoke of his old flame again. When one has lain in the gutter five years, no one cares to think of her





The Garden of Paradise.

THERE was once a king's son who had more books than any one else in the world. He could read in them about all that had

ever taken place since the creation, and there were beautiful engravings. There was not a place about which they had not something to tell him—only they did not say a single word about the Garden of Paradise, and that was the very thing the prince cared for more than all.

His grandmother had told him when he was quite little, and was just going to be sent to school, that every flower in the Garden of Paradise was made of sweet cakes, and their stamens filled with delicious wine; on one flower was written history, on another geography, or tables—

you had only to eat your cake and you knew your lesson—the more cake you ate, the more history, geography, and tables you knew.

He believed it all then; but as he grew bigger and wiser, and knew more, he understood that the glory of the Garden of Paradise must be a very different thing from that.

One day he was walking alone through the wood. Evening came on, and the clouds threatened tempest. The rain poured down; it was as dark as in the deepest well by blackest night. Suddenly he heard a strange sighing sound, and he saw before him a large hollow cavern. In the midst of the cave was a fire large enough to roast a stag, and a stag was actually roasting on a spit before it, its splendid antlers turning slowly round between two mighty pine stems. An elderly woman, tall, and broad-shouldered, sat by the fireside, and threw one log after another on to the blazing pile.

"Come in," she cried.

"The fire draws well," said the prince.

"It will draw better soon when my sons come home," said the woman. "You are in the cavern of the four winds, and my sons are the four winds. Can you make it out?"

"Where are your sons?" asked the prince.

"It is a difficult thing to answer a stupid question," said the woman. "My sons act for themselves; they are playing at battle-door and shuttlecock with the clouds up yonder in the king's hall." And she pointed to the sky.

"Oh, indeed!" said the prince. "You speak rather roughly, and do not seem

quite so gentle as the ladies I am accustomed to meet."

"I daresay they've nothing to do. I'm obliged to be rough, if I want to keep my sons in order. I manage it though, headstrong as they are. Do you see this sack hanging up by the wall? I can manage them, I promise you; I clap them into the sack without more ado, and there they are, and can't get out again until I think fit. But here comes one of them."

It was the north wind, who came in bringing an icy chill. Great hailstones rattled to the ground, and snowflakes floated round him.

"Don't go too near the fire," cried the prince; "your face and hands might be frozen."

"Frozen!" said the north wind, with a loud laugh; "cold is my greatest enjoyment. Why, what dapper little fellow are you? How did you come into the cavern of the winds?"

"He is my guest," said the old woman, and if that doesn't satisfy you, you can go in the sack; do you hear that?"

That took effect; and the north wind began to talk of all the places where he had been in the last month. "I'm come from the Polar Seas," he said; "I've been staying on Bear's Island with the Russian walrus hunters; I sat and slept at the helm when they sailed from the North Cape; and whenever I woke up, the

stormy petrel flew round my feet. The hunting began then. The harpoon was plunged into the walrus, and the hot blood-stream shot up high in the air, and stained the snow. Then I thought of my own sport. I blew away my fleet of tow-



ering icebergs, and they closed round the Russian whaler. How they whistled and shouted—but I whistled loudest. Chests, and tackle, and the dead walrus were thrown overboard on to the ice; I showered down snowflakes over them, and let the ice-bound vessel and its spoil drift southward, to taste salt water. They will come no more to Bear's Island!"

"Then you have done harm!" said the mother of the winds.

"Other folk may tell the good I do,"

he answered. "But here comes my brother from the west.

"Is that the gentle Zephyr?" asked the prince.

"It certainly is the Zephyr; but he is no longer gentle. Years ago he was a pretty boy; but he has lost his good looks."

He looked a wild fellow enough; he wore a slouched hat to shade his face, and carried a heavy mahogany club, cut from an American forest.



"Where do you come from?" said his mother.

"From the backwoods," he answered, "where the water-snake lies in the wet grass."

Then came in the south wind, wearing a turban and a flowing burnous.

"It's very cold here," he said, throwing more wood on to the fire; "it's easy to see that the north wind reached home first."

"It's hot enough to roast a polar bear," said the north wind.

"You're a polar bear yourself!" said his brother.

"Do you want to go into the sack?" said the old woman. "Sit down on that stone and give an account of yourself."

"I've been in Africa, mother," he answered. "I've been lion-hunting with the Hottentots in Caffreland."

Then came the east wind dressed like a Chinaman. "Oh, you come from over there, do you?" said his mother; "I thought you had been to the Garden of Paradise."

"I don't go there till to-morrow," said the east wind—"to-morrow it will be a hundred years since I was there before. I am come straight from China where I've been dancing on the porcelain steeples till the bells rang again. The government officials were all bastinadoed in the streets, the bamboo cane was broken over their shoulders; and yet they were people of the first to the ninth grade."

"Let us have some supper now," said the mother of the winds. All sat down to partake of the roast venison; the prince sat by the east wind, and they soon made friends with each other. "Tell me," said the prince, "what kind of a princess is the one you talk so much about? and where is the Garden of Paradise?"

"Oh, ho!" said the east wind, "do you want to go there? Come with me to-morrow."

And all of them lay down to sleep.

Towards early dawn the prince awoke and was not a little surprised to find himself high above the clouds. He was sitting on the back of the east wind, who held him tight; and they were so high in the air that the earth, with its woods and plains, rivers and seas, lay below them like a map; and so they reached the Garden of Paradise. It was a beautiful place, full of flowers. Lions and tigers sprang nimbly as cats over the green hedge-rows, fragrant

as the flowers of the olive tree, and both lions and tigers were quite tame.

Then came up the fairy of the garden: her dress glittered like the sun, and her face was bright as the face of a happy mother proud of her child. She was young and beautiful; and twelve fair maidens followed her, each wearing a shining star in her hair. She took the prince by the hand, and led him into her palace, where the walls glowed with the colors of a tulip leaf when one holds it up against the sunlight.

"May I always stay here?" he asked.

"It depends upon yourself," said the fairy. "If you are not enticed to do what is forbidden, as Adam was, you may."

"I will stay," said the prince.

"Now we begin our dances," said the fairy. "When I dance the last dance with you, you will see me beckon you and hear me say come with me, but do not listen."

The fairy led him into a hall of white, transparent lilies. The loveliest maidens, graceful and slender, their fair forms half veiled in flowing drapery, circled in the dance, and sang of the bliss of life.

The fairy beckoned him tenderly, and cried, "Come with me." And the prince forgot his promise, and rushed to her.

Then came a clap of thunder, louder and more awful than can be heard on

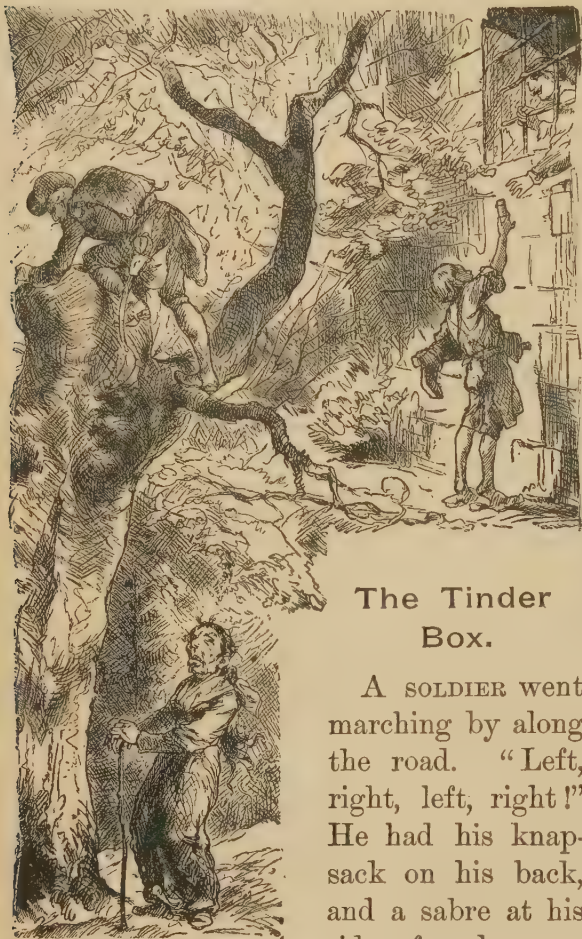
earth. All fell in ruins round him by the lovely fairy; the fair, sweet garden sank deep, deep into the gloomy night. The prince saw it sinking down like a falling star to the far, far distance. The cold of death benumbed his limbs; he closed his eyes and lay unconscious. An icy cold



rain lashed his face, keen wind blew round him, and his senses returned.

He found himself close to the Cavern of the Winds; the mother of the Winds sat by him; she angrily raised her arm.

"The very first night!" she cried. "I thought as much! If you were my son you would go in the sack."



The Tinder Box.

A SOLDIER went marching by along the road. "Left, right, left, right!" He had his knapsack on his back, and a sabre at his side, for he was

coming home from the war.

On the high road he met an old witch; she was very repulsive to look at; her under lip hung down over her chin. "Good evening, soldier," she said. "What a fine sabre you have got! and what a large knapsack! You are something like a soldier, and you shall have as much money as ever you like."

"Thank you, old witch," said the soldier.

"Do you see that tall tree yonder?" said the witch. "It is hollow inside. Climb up to the top and you will see a hole

through which you can let yourself right down into the tree. I will tie a rope round you, so that I can pull you up when you call to me."

"What am I to do when I am down in the tree?" the soldier asked.

"Fetch up money," said the witch. "Below the roots of the tree you will find a large hall, lighted up with more than three hundred lamps. Then you will see three doors; open them all, the key is in each lock. In the first room you will see a large chest in the middle of the floor, and on the chest a dog with eyes as big as saucers. Don't mind him in the least. Here is my blue-checked apron; spread that out on the floor and put the dog upon it, then open the chest and take out as much copper as you like. If you prefer silver you must go on into the next room. But *there* is a dog with eyes as big as mill-wheels—you need not fear him, however. Put him on my apron and take out the money. If you want gold, you can have it, as much as ever you can carry, by going into the third room; but the dog on the chest of gold has eyes as big as steeples—he is a savage brute, you may take my word for it. Never fear him, however; put him on my apron, he won't hurt you, and you can take as much gold as you will."

"That doesn't sound amiss," said the soldier. "But what am I to give you for it, old witch? for I don't suppose you mean to do it for nothing."

"I do," said the witch. "I won't take a penny. All I ask is that you shall bring me up an old tinder-box that my grandmother left behind her the last time she was there."

"Well, then," said the soldier, "tie the rope round my waist."

"Here it is," said the witch, "and here is my blue-checked apron."

The soldier climbed up the tree, let himself down, and stood, as the witch had said, in a great hall where hundreds of lamps were burning. He opened the first door. Ugh! there sat the dog with eyes as big as saucers, glaring at him. "You're a nice fellow!" said the soldier, lifting him on to the witch's apron.

Then he filled his pockets with copper, shut the chest, and went into the next room. Right enough, there sat the dog with eyes as big as mill-wheels.

"You had better not stare so," said the soldier; "your eyes might come out of your head altogether." He lifted the dog on to the witch's apron and at the sight of all the silver in the chest, he emptied his pockets again and filled them and his knapsack too with silver. Then he went into the third room. That really was awful! The dog had eyes every inch as big as towers, and they turned round and round in his head like wheels.

"Good morning," said the soldier, touching his cap, for he had never seen such a dog in his life. But after looking at him more closely, he thought he had been civil enough, so he placed him on the floor and opened the chest. Good gracious, what a quantity of gold there was! enough to buy all the sugar-sticks of the sweet-stuff women; all the tin-soldiers, whips, and rocking-horses in the world, or even the whole town itself. There was, indeed, an immense quantity. So the soldier now threw away all the silver money he had

taken, and filled his pockets and his knapsack with gold instead; and not only his pockets and his knapsack, but even his cap and his boots, so that he could scarcely walk.

He was really rich now; so he replaced the dog on the chest, closed the door, and called up through the tree, "Now pull me out, you old witch."



"Have you got the tinder-box?" asked the witch.

"No; I declare I quite forgot it." So he went back and fetched the tinder-box, and then the witch drew him up out of the tree, and he stood again in the high road, with his pockets, his knapsack, his cap, and his boots full of gold.

"What are you going to do with the tinder-box?" asked the soldier.

"That's no business of yours," said the witch; "you have your money; give me the box."

"What's that you say?" cried the sol-

dier. "Tell me this very minute what you want it for, or I'll draw my sword and cut off your head."

"I won't!" said the witch.

The soldier immediately cut off her head. There she lay. He tied up all his money in her apron, slung it like a bundle over his shoulder, put the tinder-box in his pocket, and walked on towards the town.



It was a splendid town. The soldier went into one of the best hotels, engaged the largest room, and ordered everything he liked best for supper. He was rich now, because he had so much money.

The man who blacked his boots thought it was strange that such a rich gentleman should wear such very old boots, but the next day the soldier bought new ones, and a new suit of clothes. He was not a soldier now, but a fine gentleman; and the people spoke to him of all the remarkable things in the town, of the king, and the beautiful young princess, his daughter.

"Where can one see her?" asked the soldier.

"You cannot see her," was the reply;

"she lives in a large brazen castle, surrounded by walls and turrets. No one but the king may enter, because it was once prophesied that she would marry a common soldier."

"I should like to look at her," said the soldier; but it was quite impossible for him to obtain permission.

From this time he lived a merry life, going to theatres, and driving about in the royal parks and gardens. He gave away a great deal to the poor, and that was right of him; he knew of old what it is not to have a shilling in one's pocket. Now he was rich, wore fine clothes, and had numbers of friends, who all said he was an excellent fellow, and a perfect gentleman. The soldier was pleased at that. But unluckily, as he went on spending money every day, and never earning any more, he found himself at last with scarcely any left, and was obliged to leave his beautiful rooms for a little garret under the roof, where he had to black his own boots, and mend them with a packing-needle. None of his friends came to see him now—there were too many steps to climb.

It was a dark night, and he could not even buy himself a candle; but it suddenly occurred to him that there was a piece of candle left in the tinder-box which he had fetched up for the old witch, out of the hollow tree. He struck a light, and the moment it flashed up, the door opened, and in came the dog with eyes as big as saucers. "What does my lord require?" said the dog.

"What is this?" said the soldier. "This is a lively sort of a tinder-box if I can get whatever I like out of it! Get me some

money," he said to the dog, and *whish!* off he was—*whish!* there he was back again with a bag full of copper, in his mouth.

Then the soldier began to see what a famous box it was. You struck it once, and up came the dog with eyes as big as saucers; you struck it twice, and up came the one that sat on the chest of silver; three times, and up came the one that kept guard over the gold. The soldier went down stairs again into his beautiful rooms, and bought some more fine clothes. Then all his friends knew him again directly, and thought a great deal of him.

After a while he began to think it was very strange that no one could get a look at the princess. "Every one says she is very beautiful," he thought to himself; "but what is the use of that if she is to be shut up in a copper castle surrounded by so many towers. Can I by any means get to see her? Stop! where is my tinder-box?" Then he struck a light, and in a moment the dog, with eyes as big as tea-cups, stood before him.

"It is midnight," said the soldier, "yet I should very much like to see the princess, if only for one moment."

The dog disappeared instantly, and before the soldier could even look round, he returned with the princess. She was lying on the dog's back asleep, and looked so lovely, that every one who saw her would know that she was a real princess. The soldier could not help kissing her, true soldier as he was. Then the dog ran back with the princess; but in the morning, while at breakfast with the king and queen, she told them what a singular dream she had had during the night, of a dog and

a soldier, that she had ridden on the dog's back, and had been kissed by the soldier.

"That is a very pretty story, indeed," said the queen. So the next night one of the old ladies of the court was set to watch by the princess's bed, to discover whether it really was a dream.

The soldier longed very much to see the princess once more, so he sent for the dog again in the night to fetch her. But the old lady put on water-boots, and ran after him, and found that he carried the princess into a large house. She thought it would help her to remember the place if she made a large cross on the door with a piece of



chalk. Then she went home to bed, and the dog returned with the princess. But when he saw that a cross had been made on the door of the house where the soldier lived, he took another piece of chalk and made crosses on all the doors of the town.

Early the next morning the king and queen accompanied the old lady and all the

officers of the household, to see where the princess had been.

"Here it is," said the king, when they came to the first door with a cross on it.

"And here is one, and there is another!" they all exclaimed.

So they felt it would be useless to search any farther. But the queen was a very clever woman; she could do a great deal more than merely ride in a carriage. She took her large gold scissors, cut a piece of silk into squares, and made a neat little bag. This bag she filled with flour, and tied it round the princess's neck; and then she cut a small hole in the bag, so that the flour might be scattered on the ground as the princess went along. During the night the dog came again and carried the princess on his back, and ran with her to the soldier, who loved her very much.

The dog never noticed the flour as it fell all along the road from the castle to the soldier's room. The next morning the king and queen saw clearly where their daughter had been, and the soldier was immediately arrested, and put in prison.

There he had to stop. It was dull and gloomy enough, and all they said to him was, "You will be hanged to-morrow!" That was not exactly cheering, and his tinder-box was left behind in his lodgings. The next morning, through the bars of his window, he saw a shoemaker's lad, in his apron and slippers, who was running so fast that one of his slippers fell off, and flew right up against the window.

"Hallo! my lad," cried the soldier; "just run to my lodgings, and fetch me my tinder-box; you shall have a shilling for your trouble."

The lad thought he should like to earn the shilling, so he fetched the tinder-box, gave it to the soldier, and——well, now we shall hear.

The gallows was set up outside the town, and round it stood the soldiers and thousands of people. The king and queen sat on a splendid throne, opposite the judges and council. The soldier mounted the ladder, the rope was placed round his neck, when he said that the last harmless wish of a poor wretch was always granted, and he begged permission to smoke a pipe of tobacco.

The king granted his request, and the soldier struck his box—once, twice, thrice! In a moment, up sprang the three dogs.

"Help me, so that I shall not be hanged!" said the soldier. And the dogs flew at the judges and the council, seizing one by the leg and one by the nose, and tossing them up in the air to such a height that they fell down, and broke all to bits.

"I won't be tossed!" said the king, but up he went, and the queen after him. That frightened the soldiers and the people to such a degree, that they cried out, "Noble soldier! you shall be our king, and marry the princess."





The Traveling Companion.

WHEN John's father died he had not a friend left. So, the morning after the funeral, he tied up his little bundle, hid in his waistband his whole fortune of fifty dollars and two silver shillings, and went forth into the world. He slept the first night on a haycock in the field. The next day was Sunday, and as John passed a churchyard, he saw a poor beggar leaning on the gate. John gave him his two silver shillings and went on quite happy.

Towards evening a terrible storm came on. John sought shelter in the corner of a little church, and being very tired, he

soon fell fast asleep. When he awoke, it was midnight. In the centre of the church stood a coffin, in which was a dead man awaiting burial. Two wicked men were about to take the body out of the coffin.

"What are you doing?" said John. "It is a wicked deed."

"He owed us money, and could not pay," said they, "and we will throw him out-doors. If you will give us fifty dollars we will let him alone." John gave them his fifty dollars, and they went away.

The next day a man overtook him, and they walked on together and became great friends.

The sun stood high in the sky when they sat down under a tall tree to eat their breakfast. Just at that time there came up an old woman, bent and weak. She leant upon her crutch, and carried on her back a bundle of firewood which she

had gathered in the wood. Her apron was tied up, and John saw that three great rods of fern fronds and willow withes peeped out of it. When she had nearly reached the two friends she slipped on one foot, fell, and broke her leg.

The stranger untied his bundle, took out a box, and said that he had some salve which would make her leg strong and well. But he asked, in return, for the three rods which she carried in her apron.

"That would be good payment," said the old woman, nodding strangely with her head. She did not wish to part with the rods, but then it was not pleasant to be

lying there with a broken leg. So she gave up the rods; and as soon as he had rubbed the salve on the leg the old woman got up and walked away.

That night they stopped to rest at an inn. The people were all assembled to see a puppet show. They were charming puppets—a queen in a silk dress, and courtiers with glass eyes and long moustaches.

With a stroke of the sabre the stranger cut off her wings. "We may want them," said he.

They travelled on for many miles across the mountains, until they came to a great city with hundreds of steeples, shining like silver in the sunshine. In the centre of the town was a splendid marble palace, roofed with pure gold. The king lived there.



John and his friend stayed in the inn before the gates, so that they could make themselves tidy. The landlord told them that the king was a very good man who never did any one any harm, but his daughter—heaven preserve us!—she *was* a wicked princess! Beauty she had in plenty; no one could be prettier. But what did that matter? She was a wicked witch, and it was her wickedness that had driven many a noble prince to lose his life. Every one had permission to ask her in marriage. Any one might come, prince or beggar, it was all one to her. All he had to do

The play began, and just as the pretty queen rose up, a butcher's dog jumped on the stage and bit her head off. The showman was in great distress, but the stranger brought out his salve and made the queen as good as new. The showman was so well pleased that he gave the stranger his sabre. The next day a beautiful swan fell from the air and died just beside them.

was to guess three things that she had just thought of. If he could do that she would marry him, and he should be king over the whole land when her father died; but if he did not guess them, she had him immediately hung or beheaded.

Just then they heard the people cry "Hurrah!" The princess was passing by, and she was really so beautiful that they

could not help cheering. As soon as John saw her he turned as red as a drop of blood, and resolved to ask her in marriage. So he brushed his shoes and coat, and went to the palace.

"Come in," said the old king, as John knocked at the door. John entered, and the old king came to meet him in dressing-gown and slippers. His crown was on his head, the sceptre in one hand and the ball in the other. "Wait a bit," he said, and put the ball under his arm to shake hands with John. But as soon as he heard that the young man was come as a lover, he began to weep so bitterly that both ball and sceptre fell to the ground, and he was obliged to dry his eyes on his dressing-gown.

"Let it alone," he cried. "You will come to a bad end like all the others." But John was enchanted with the princess, and was determined to ask her in marriage.

So the king took him to the princess, who promised to marry him, if he guessed what she was thinking of, three days in succession, and he was to make his first trial the next day. That night, while John slept, the stranger put on the swan's wings and flew away to the palace, just in time to see the princess fly out of her window with two black wings. She went direct to a sorcerer who lived in the mountains. She told him about her new lover and asked him what she should think of that he should guess. The sorcerer said "Think of your shoes. He will never guess that. Have him beheaded and bring me his eyes to-morrow."

The stranger saw and heard it all, but as he was invisible, they could not see him. He got back before John was awake, and

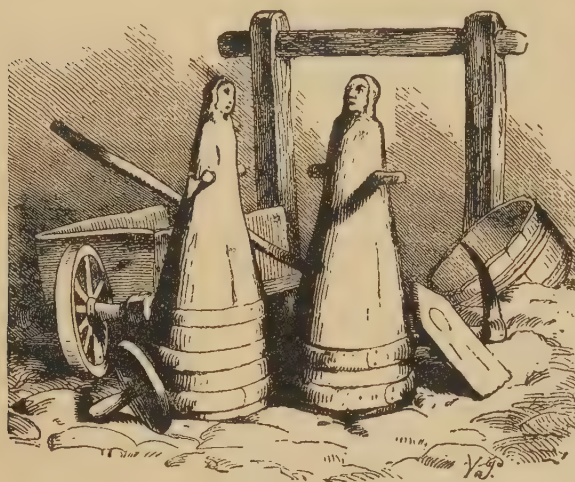
told him what to guess, when the princess should ask him. When John guessed right, the princess turned pale, but the whole court rejoiced.

The next night, the stranger flew behind the princess and heard the sorcerer tell her to think of her glove. So John guessed



right again. The third night the sorcerer told her to think of his head. The stranger lingered a moment behind the princess, cut off the sorcerer's head and took it back in a silk handkerchief.

The next day he gave John the package and told him to open it when the princess asked him to guess. When he did so, the princess turned pale, but she took him by the hand and married him, and was a good princess ever afterward.



Two Maids.

HAVE you ever seen a maid? I mean a thing with which they stamp down the pavement smooth and firm. That kind of maid is made of wood, and stands on a broad foot with iron bands. Its head is narrow, and through its waist is a stout stick which serves for its arms.

Two maids of that kind were standing in the warehouse yard. A rumor had reached the whole community that the maids were never to be called maids any more. Hand-rammers were the new names that had been invented for them.

But the maids were by no means willing to give up their time-honored name and allow themselves to be spoken of as hand-rammers.

"Maid is the name of a human being," they said; "but a hand-rammer is a thing, and we will not be addressed as 'Thing.'"

"My betrothed would be quite capable of withdrawing from his engagement," said the younger maid. She was engaged to a rammer-log; that is to say, a large machine

that is used in driving stakes into the ground—in fact, doing the same sort of work as the maid did, only on a larger scale.

"And I," said the elder, "would sooner have my two arms chopped off!"

The wheelbarrow was of a different opinion. "I must call your attention," he said, "to the fact that 'maid' is rather common; it is not nearly so select as 'hand-rammer.' I would certainly give up 'maid.'"

"Never—never," cried the elder.

"You have perhaps never heard of what is called the European necessity," interposed the worthy wood-measure. "One must learn to yield one's private inclinations to the exigencies of the times; and if the law has been passed that maids are to be called hand-rammers, why hand-rammers they must be, and it is of no use pouting."

"Never! If I must change, I would rather be called Miss—that is a little like maid, at any rate."

"But *I* would rather be chopped to pieces," said the elder.

At last the workmen came up; the maids were driven to work in the wheelbarrow; that was humane treatment; but they were called hand-rammers all the same.

But they always called each other "maid," and spoke of the good old times when things were called by their right names, and if one was a maid one was addressed as maid; and maids they remained, for the rammer-log went back from his engagement, as had been anticipated. He had set his heart on a maid.



Children's Prattle.

THERE was a children's party at the rich merchant's; and all the little guests were the children of wealthy and notable people. The merchant was a scholarly man himself; he had taken a degree at his college, and when he went into business he prospered and grew very wealthy. His father had originally been a cattle dealer, an honest and industrious man, and he had given his son a first-rate education and a good start in life. The merchant was both clever and good-hearted; but people talked much less about his heart than about his money. Very aristocratic people visited at his house: well-born people, as they are called, clever people, those who were both well-born and clever, and those who were neither. This time it was a party of children who were met together, and there was plenty of children's prattle. Children, as we all know, are very outspoken; and

among the rest there was one lovely little girl who had learned from the servants to be extremely proud. Her parents were well-bred, sensible people; her father was a chamberlain, and she knew very well that that was something great.

"I am a chamberlain's daughter," she said. She might just as easily have been a chimneysweep's daughter, only it had happened otherwise. Then she told the other children that she was "well-born" and said that if people were not "well-born," they could never come to any good. It was no use their being clever and industrious; if they were not "well-born," they were nothing.

"And those whose names end in 'sen,'" she said, "they are never worth knowing; they are of no account at all. One must just put one's arms akimbo and make these 'sens' keep their distance." And with that she put her pretty little hands on each side of her waist and rounded her dimpled elbows. She was a pretty little girl.

But the merchant's little daughter was very angry; her father's name was Petersen, and she knew that it ended in "sen," so she said, angrily, "My father can buy a hundred pounds' worth of bonbons and throw them all among the children; can your father do that?"

"Yes; but my father," said the daughter of an author, "can put your father, and everybody's father, in the newspaper! My mother says that everybody is afraid of him, because he governs the newspaper."

And the little creature looked as proud as if she had been a real princess who was obliged to look proud.

But outside the door stood a poor boy

looking in through the chink. He was so poor and mean that he dared not go into the room. He had been turning the spit for the cook in the kitchen, and she had allowed him to stand behind the door and look at the beautifully dressed children who were enjoying themselves in the drawing-room. It was a great treat for him to look on from a distance.

"If I were only one of them!" he thought to himself. He listened to their conversation, and it made him very unhappy, and no wonder. His father and mother had not a penny to spare; they could not afford to buy a newspaper, much less could they write in one. And then came the worst of all; his father's name, and consequently his own name too, ended in "sen;" so that he was of no account; he could never come to any good. It was very depressing! And yet he thought he was born as well as any one could be; he could not understand how it was possible to be born better.

That was what happened on that night at the children's party.

Years passed away and turned the children into grown-up men and women.

A splendid house stood in the town, filled with all kinds of rare and costly treasures. People came to see it from far-distant lands. To which of all the children of whom we have been speaking did it belong? Oh, that is very easy to guess. No, it is not so easy. It belonged to the poor boy who stood outside the door; he had come to some good, although his name ended in "sen"—

THORWALDSEN.

And the three other children, the well-born, the rich, and the clever child? Well, the one had no reason to reproach the other. They all became what Nature meant them to be. As to what they said and thought when they were little, that is not of so much account, for, after all, it was mere children's prattle.





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